

**NORTH CAROLINA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE**  
**Office of Archives and History**  
**Department of Cultural Resources**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**

**Flat Top Estate**

Blowing Rock, Watauga County, WT0643, Listed 12/24/2013  
Nomination by Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.  
Photographs by John Milner Associates, October 2010



Flat Top Manor



Apple Barn





Historic Carriage Drive

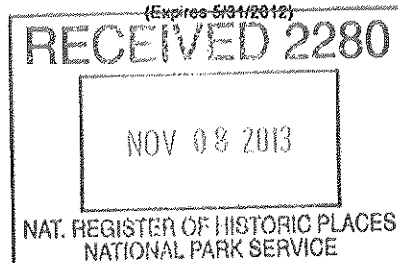


View of Manor House from Bass Lake



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Flat Top Estate

other names/site number Moses H. Cone Memorial Park

### 2. Location

street & number Blue Ridge Parkway (BLRI), from milepost 292.8 to 295.5

☐ not for publication

city or town Blowing Rock

☒

vicinity

state North Carolina

code NC

county Watauga

code 189

zip code 28605

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

☒ national ☒ statewide ☐ local

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

☒ entered in the National Register

☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register

☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

## 1. Name of Property

historic name Flat Top Estate

other names/site number Moses H. Cone Memorial Park

## 2. Location

street & number Blue Ridge Parkway (BLRI), from milepost 292.8 to 295.5

N/A

not for publication

city or town Blowing Rock

X

vicinity

state North Carolina code NC county Watauga code 189 zip code 28605

## 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

☒ national ☐ statewide ☐ local

Kevin Cherry, SHPO 8/20/2013  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

North Carolina Dept. of Cultural Resources  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

## 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

☐ entered in the National Register ☐ determined eligible for the National Register

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register ☐ removed from the National Register

☐ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply.)

- ☐ private  
☐ public - Local  
☐ public - State  
☒ public - Federal

### Category of Property (Check only one box.)

- ☐ building(s)  
☒ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

### Number of Resources within Property (Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
4	5	buildings
2	0	sites
0	12	structures
0	0	objects
6	17	<b>Total</b>

Please see table of contributing and non-contributing resources following Section 7 narrative.

### Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

DOMESTIC/secondary structure

EDUCATION/school

RELIGION/religious facility

FUNERARY/cemetery

RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation

AGRICULTURE-SUBSISTENCE/agricultural field

AGRICULTURE-SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

LANDSCAPE/park

LANDSCAPE/natural feature

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

TRANSPORTATION/pedestrian-related

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE/specialty store

RELIGION/religious facility

FUNERARY/cemetery

RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation

LANDSCAPE/park

LANDSCAPE/natural feature

TRANSPORTATION/road-related

TRANSPORTATION/pedestrian-related



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/

Colonial Revival

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: BRICK; STONE

walls: WOOD/Weatherboard

WOOD/Shingle

roof: WOOD/Shingle; METAL

other:

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### Summary Paragraph

The Flat Top Estate Historic District is a designed historic landscape representative of the Country Place era. Set within the rolling terrain of western North Carolina's Blue Ridge Mountains, the estate was the summer home and seasonal retreat of textile magnate Moses Cone and his wife Bertha. The Cones assembled a 3,516-acre property, located near the town of Blowing Rock, from several parcels acquired between 1892 and 1899. Within the estate, the Cones built an impressive manor house, designed by architect Orlo Epps, on a prominent knoll with expansive views of the mountains to the south that survives today, as well as more than 25 miles of carriage drives designed by Mr. Cone to provide access to the scenic rolling and mountainous terrain. During their tenure on the estate, the Cones transformed a landscape of exhausted farmlands into a bucolic pleasure ground where visitors were introduced to the wonder and beauty of nature through the winding journey of Cone's carriage drives, carefully considered plantings, overlooks and stonework features, an observation tower, and constructed water features. The Cones applied a conservation ethic to the land, reclaiming and enhancing the soil, and planting native species to reforest eroded fields. The Cones also engaged in their own agricultural programs, providing employment for many Blowing Rock residents, and helped to establish the nearby Sandy Flat School and Missionary Baptist Church and residences for their tenants and employees.

The boundaries of the nominated property are consistent with the estate assembled by the Cones during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, except for the exclusion of a 20-acre parcel transferred to the Town of Blowing Rock in 2012. The 3,496-acre property addressed by this nomination exhibits the characteristics of the Country Place era through a combination of active agricultural production and recreational activities that make direct reference to the characteristics and features of the picturesque mountain environment. Together, the Cones created a unique vernacular expression of the Country Place era estate, layered with an ethic of environmental conservation and stewardship, an appreciation for nature, and a legacy of built features exemplified by the carriage drive system that unified the experiential qualities of the property. Their conservation philosophy influenced and shaped the design and development of the estate, as denoted by a rustic aesthetic that combines curvilinear forms, natural and native materials, and prominent views of native landforms, views, water features, and plant materials. Today, the property continues to convey its historic associations with Moses and Bertha Cone through the surviving evidence of their design and aesthetic approach to land management, agricultural production, and passive recreation, including the Colonial Revival style Manor House, 21 miles of carriage drives, Trout and Bass lakes and other constructed water features, Flat Top Orchard, fields and pastures, plantings, stone work, and scenic overlooks. Diminishing the integrity of the historic property is the encroachment of suburban development associated with the town of Blowing Rock on the formerly rural landscape surrounding the property as well as the construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway across the center of the estate in 1955-1957. Parkway construction, and administration of the large estate by the National Park Service as a part of the much larger road system, resulted in several changes to the property in the 1950s and 1960s, including the demolition of more than 50 structures due to concerns regarding the agency's ability to maintain them, the provision of new parking areas, maintenance structures, and employee residences, as well as adaptation of many of the circulation and recreational features as trails for visitors. Nonetheless, the structure, patterns of spatial organization, system of carriage drives, ponds, key views and vistas, and many of the stone features designed by the Cones survive today or have been restored by the National Park Service. While these changes have diminished the property's integrity of

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

setting, feeling, and association, the property continues to convey its important associations with the Cones and their impressive work of vernacular landscape architecture, which affords a deep connection with the beauty and splendor of the Blue Ridge Mountains and local conditions and materials. Today, the property exhibits significant associations with both the Cones and their sophisticated, yet vernacular, design of the estate and the Blue Ridge Parkway through the survival of the designed historic landscape, which constitutes one contributing site.<sup>1</sup> The cemetery where the Cones are buried is also located on the property. This resource, which features a wrought iron fence, a stone monument, tree plantings, and views of the mountains in two directions, also constitutes one contributing site. The four buildings constructed by the Cones during their tenure on the estate that survive with integrity also contribute to the significance of the property. They include Flat Top Manor, the Carriage House, Apple Barn, and Sandy Flat Missionary Baptist Church. The period of significance associated with the Cone tenure of the estate extends from the beginning of construction of their manor house in 1899 to Bertha Cone's death in 1947.

Flat Top Estate Historic District contains resources related to the Cone Family and National Park Service development of the Blue Ridge Parkway. National Register documentation for the resources will be completed in two stages. This National Register nomination documents the resources associated with the Cone tenure of the estate (1899–1947). For purposes of this nomination, resources associated with the National Park Service development are considered non-contributing because they do not contribute to the areas or period of significance addressed in this nomination. They include five non-contributing buildings associated with estate and parkway operations, as well as twelve non-contributing structures, such as the Blue Ridge Parkway road corridor and its associated mile markers, bridges, culverts, signage, and visitor access and interpretation features that support use of the road and the Flat Top Estate by visitors. The National Park Service era resources within the property will be documented in a National Historic Landmark nomination. The National Historic Landmark nomination will evaluate the National Park Service era resources as part of the larger Blue Ridge Parkway, which stretches 469 miles through Virginia and North Carolina. Contracts have been awarded for an inventory of Blue Ridge Parkway resources and for preparation of the National Historic Landmark nomination. The inventory project started in the Fall of 2012 and preparation of the National Historic Landmark nomination is scheduled to begin in the Fall of 2013. The National Historic Landmark nomination will establish areas of significance and a period of significance for resources related to the development of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Although areas and periods of significance for resources related to the development of the Parkway have not yet been established, Blue Ridge Parkway staff believe the resources to be eligible for the National Register and manage them as cultural resources. In August of 2004 the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office concurred with the National Park Service's assessment that the Blue Ridge Parkway was eligible for nomination to the National Register.

## Narrative Description

### *Overview of the Evolution of the Property*

In 1892, successful entrepreneur Moses Cone (1857–1908) purchased his first parcel of land near the small mountain community of Blowing Rock, North Carolina. Although it is not known whether this land was initially intended as a speculative purchase, he would continue to acquire parcels over the next several years until he had amassed a property of more than 3,500 acres. In 1900, Moses Cone and his wife Bertha built a 23-room mansion on the property, establishing the property as their summer country retreat or estate. The land had previously served small rural farms, but the mountainous terrain and thin soils were overworked and eroded by the time the Cones settled on the property.

Despite the generally rural nature of the landscape, the estate was connected to the community of Blowing Rock, fast becoming a summer resort for wealthy Southern families, by several public road corridors including the Yonahlossee Turnpike, the predecessor of U.S. Highway 221.

Beginning circa 1899, the Cones began an extensive program of estate development that included, in addition to the construction of the Manor House, numerous employees residences, support and outbuildings, miles of carriage drives, acres of plantings, constructed water features, overlooks, walls, and gardens. The most impressive of these efforts was the system of carriage drives designed by Moses Cone, and constructed by engineers and road crews under his direction between 1899 and 1905. Cone designed all of the carriage drives to provide a pleasurable and recreational experience for those on foot, horseback, or riding in horse-drawn carriages. As part of the farm component of the estate, the Cones planted extensive fruit tree orchards, and

1. For purposes of this National Register nomination, the entire designed landscape has been considered as one site in the resource count, including all natural and constructed landscape features, with the exception of the Cone Cemetery, which counts as an additional site. Primary structures (e.g., Flat Top Manor, Carriage House, Apple Barn, are counted as individual resources. The individual features of the designed landscape are generally described in this narrative. Additional information about specific features is provided in the Cultural Landscape Inventory in development for the National Park Service Southeast Regional Office and Blue Ridge Parkway concurrently with this nomination.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

maintained pasture and hay fields to support his model stock farm, employing the principles of scientific agriculture to improve the soil and productivity of the land. Within the vicinity of the manor house, the Cones established terraced garden beds used to grow vegetables as well as ornamental flowers, as well as recreational features such as pleasure walks, a croquet lawn, tennis courts, boat houses, and a bowling alley.

By the time of Moses Cone's untimely death at the age of 50 in 1908, the estate included twenty-five miles of carriage drives that traversed the range of terrain and provided access to the property's many attractions, two lakes, stone-lined pools, extensive tree plantations, ornamental shrub masses, two deer parks, three orchards, overlooks and towers, more than fifty buildings, and numerous pastures and meadows.

After the death of Moses Cone, his wife Bertha established a cemetery on an elevated knoll on the property that afforded long views of the Blue Ridge Mountains. To ensure the perpetual maintenance of the estate and its opening to the public after her death, she deeded the property to the Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital in 1911, giving it the name "Moses H. Cone Memorial Park." Bertha Cone retained the right to live at and manage the estate for the remainder of her life, and continued to reside on the property during the summer months until her death in 1947. She is known to have continued the work begun with her husband by maintaining and managing the livestock herds and pastures and the apple orchards, and expanding the extent of ornamental plantings, adding a considerable number of shrubs alongside the carriage drives, particularly around Bass Lake. Bertha Cone also established a dairy farm on the property that included new barns and other features that continued operations until circa 1940. By the later years of the Great Depression, maintenance of the apple orchards and the dairy farm became increasingly difficult for Bertha Cone, and some aspects of the management of the property declined. Bertha Cone died in 1947 and was buried beside her husband in the Cone Cemetery.

Although Bertha Cone had stipulated that the estate be transferred to the trustees of the Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital in Greensboro, North Carolina, and was outwardly averse during her lifetime to the proposals that had been made for over ten years to continue the Blue Ridge Parkway through the property, the hospital ultimately found it would be unable to manage the property. In 1950, the trustees determined that they would be unable to adequately maintain the property and elected to transfer it to the federal government for inclusion within the Blue Ridge Parkway.

During her later years, Bertha Cone allowed the town of Blowing Rock to remove water from a stream on the estate for public-works needs. After ownership of Flat Top Estate was transferred to the United States government in 1950, the city was issued a special-use permit in 1955 to construct a small dam and reservoir that would impact part of the property. A 20-acre parcel, which includes the 11-acre reservoir, was transferred to the Town of Blowing Rock in 2012.

The Blue Ridge Parkway that now divides the Flat Top Estate Historic District across a southeast to northwest axis was constructed through the property between 1955 and 1957. Construction of the parkway led to the destruction or interruption of portions of the carriage drive system designed by Moses Cone. In order to restore historic circulation routes on the property, a parkway overpass was built in 1960 behind the manor house that connects the carriage drives to the north and south.

Also in 1960, the Yonahlossee Turnpike (present-day U.S. Highway 221) was widened and partially realigned, resulting in the demolition of an arched stone bridge that had conveyed May View Road over the public road corridor. The carriage drive was rerouted beneath the improved highway via a stone-faced box culvert overpass.

In the late 1970s, the Boone Turnpike that edges the property to the east was enlarged to four lanes.

By the late twentieth century, residential subdivisions associated with the town of Blowing Rock had begun encroaching on the property boundary and views from the estate. Subdivisions have been built along the southern district boundary visible from portions of the estate. From the Flat Top Manor, the expansive views to the south now include clusters of late twentieth century dwellings.

### ***Setting and Overview Property Description***

The Flat Top Estate Historic District is nestled within the rolling-to-rugged terrain of the Blue Ridge Mountains less than two miles from the town of Blowing Rock within western North Carolina's Watauga County. Features of the estate relate directly to the dramatic landform and topography characteristic of the Appalachian Highlands region of western North Carolina and the southern Blue Ridge physiographic province. The undulating terrain features elevated mountainous topography cut by narrow stream corridors. From high points and ridges, long views of Blue Ridge Mountain range are accentuated by the clearings, framed viewpoints, carriage drive overlooks, and observation towers designed by Moses Cone during the late nineteenth and early



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

twentieth century. Twenty-one miles of carriage drives wind their way across hill and dale, through native forest plantations, flowering shrub drifts, mown meadows, pasture, orchards, and along stream corridors to stone-lined pools, falls, and lakes, all carefully orchestrated by the Cones for the aesthetic enjoyment of the visitor and to foster appreciation for the environment. Native schist, which forms outcroppings throughout the property, was used by the Cones to construct the walls, culverts, water features, overlooks, and other elements that complement the carriage drive system.

Much of the landscape surrounding the Flat Top Estate Historic District remains rural and sparsely settled, with the exception of lands to the south and east. The town of Blowing Rock has experienced extensive growth since the late twentieth century, and residential subdivisions are now located within view of the manor house and along the property's southeastern boundary.

Several public road corridors edge or pass through the historic district. Most of these road corridors were present during the Cone era, but have been modified through the straightening of their alignments or widening. They include U.S. Highway 221 (formerly the Yonahlossee Turnpike) that extends generally east-west through the southern section of the district; Flannery Fork Road (State Route 1541), a narrow, two-way, hard-packed earth-and-gravel county road corridor that extends northeast from Shulls Mill Road north of the Blue Ridge Parkway; Shulls Mill Road, a public road corridor that leads northwest from U.S. Highway 221 through a portion of the historic district; and Laurel Lane, formerly known as Brown Road, that runs southward from U.S. Highway 221 along the southern boundary of the district. The Old Boone Road, which historically passed through the eastern part of the district, is only evident as a trace within the landscape today, as is Old Camp Catawba Road that still connects U.S. Highway 321 with Wadkins Road, except for a section that has been abandoned. Flat Top Road is a contemporary road that was built after the Cone era of ownership in the general vicinity of the Old Boone Road. A very short segment of U.S. Highway 321, formerly known as the Boone Turnpike, crosses the property in its southeastern corner.

Within the framework of the rural Blue Ridge Mountain setting, the Flat Top Estate Historic District continues to convey the character of a rural late-nineteenth/early-twentieth-century agrarian mountain estate that highlights, using a rustic design vocabulary, the natural environment. Overall, the property features steeply-sloped mountain terrain as well as narrow level ridgelines and knolls, and stream valleys that are variously maintained in woodland, open meadow or pasture, and orchard plantings. The terrain is extremely varied. The northern portion of the estate exhibits more elevated topography and includes the summits of Rich and Flat Top mountains. The heart of the estate features a plateau cut by several stream corridors. The Flat Top Manor house occupies a prominent knoll atop the plateau that affords expansive views to the south and east, and takes advantage of the cool mountain breezes that first attracted the Cones to the area in the 1890s. The landform generally falls away from north to south, with the district's low point located in the southwestern corner along a branch of China Creek.

Several stream corridors cut steeply-sloped ravines through the terrain. Some of these streams have been dammed to form lakes and water features on the property that are part of the orchestrated experience of the designed landscape, including Bass and Trout lakes.

The majority of the Moses Cone estate is currently wooded. The woodlands include native hardwood communities present at the time the Cones purchased the estate, others that have arisen through secondary succession after the abandonment of agricultural activities, and evergreen plantations established by the Cones during the early twentieth century to reforest former farmsteads in support of soil conservation and to enhance views and the carriage drive corridors. The first areas to be planted, circa 1900, included the Entrance Road near Sandy Flat Gap, the house environs, and Bass Lake. Species used to establish the plantations include white pine (*Pinus strobus*), Fraser fir (*Abies fraseri*), hemlocks (*Tsuga caroliniana*, *T. canadensis*), and Norway (*Picea abies*) and black spruce (*P. ariana*). As noted by Ian Firth in a Cultural Landscape Report for the property, the plantings can easily be recognized as plantations as each stand is even-aged, and the spacing of trees within a stand is fairly uniform. The pines are between 76 and 106 years of age. There is an understory of hardwoods within the stands, but most of the saplings appear to be no more than 50 years old.<sup>2</sup>

Other woody vegetation planted by the Cones that survives today includes long rows of native trees that grace the margins of several of the carriage drives, and extensive drifts of rosebay and Catawba rhododendron (*Rhododendron maximum* and *R. catawbiense*) and mountain laurel on the slopes adjoining the carriage drives and along Flannery Fork Road. These shrubs were not added until after the white pines were planted to ensure that sufficient shade would be present to provide the proper growing environment for the natives. Shrubs were typically planted on the uphill slopes of the road corridors, around rock outcrops, and to accentuate switchbacks. For example, a grouping of rosebay rhododendron was planted in the center of the double switchback on Flat Top Road. The purple blossoms still delight and surprise visitors who travel the road in the spring. Flat Top Mountain

2. Ian J. Firth, *Moses H. Cone Memorial Park: A Cultural Landscape Report* (Atlanta, Georgia: National Park Service, August 1993), 11.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

includes primarily *R. maximum*, while *R. catawbiense* is more prevalent on Rich Mountain. These plantings have matured and spread over the past 100 years.

The Cones focused the plantings of non-natives around Bass Lake. Large beds of white flowering Pee Gee hydrangea (*Hydrangea paniculata* var. *Grandiflora*), introduced from Japan and popular in the nineteenth century, survive along the southwestern margins of Bass Lake. These were added by Bertha Cone after her husband's death. Beyond the hydrangeas, are groves of Norway spruce, hemlocks, Fraser fir, and white pines planted circa 1900, which provided an evergreen backdrop for the flowering shrubs. The Bass Lake area also includes banks of rhododendron to the north, some of which are hybrids, a double line of hemlocks planted around 1916, and a line of tulip poplars. Some of the hydrangea beds have been restored by the National Park Service. Bertha Cone established hedges of hemlock along the Yonahlossee Turnpike between Sandy Flat and Bass Lake. Mrs. Cone was concerned that widening of the turnpike would damage the hedge. Today, much of the hedge has been lost as Bertha Cone predicted.

The tree plantings designed to follow the carriage drive corridors also survive in great part today; most are concentrated within the southern half of the property. These planting programs began circa 1900 as the earliest roads were completed. The species used included white pine, Fraser fir, sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), and tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*). These rows of trees were planted along the Entrance, Stringfellow, Duncan, and Bass Lake roads. A double row of sugar maple trees was also planted along Bass Lake Road. The sugar maples are said to have been transported to the estate from New Hampshire, where they are native, and that Mr. Cone took special pride in their beauty.<sup>3</sup> Elsewhere, the deciduous species—sugar maples or tulip poplars—were used to edge the downhill side of the road, while the evergreens—Fraser firs and white pines—were planted on the uphill side. Some single lines of trees were also planted along roads in some open areas. A line of white ash (*Fraxinus americana*) was planted along the Entrance Road at the lower entrance into the carriage house. White ash were also planted along May View Road. White ash and sugar maples were added to the woodlands along the road where the Rich Mountain Road left the forest near the summit of the mountain.<sup>4</sup> Most of these plantings survive on the property today.

Much of the landscape around the manor house is maintained in mown grass in support of intended views and activity areas. Evidence of the recreational features and gardens developed around the house by the Cones survives within the house precinct. These include a terraced garden below the carriage house has been restored by the National Park Service and the Figure 8 Walk, a shaded stroll garden southwest of the manor house.

Elsewhere on the property, open fields, pastures, and meadows survive from the Cone era. As part of the design of the estate, these open spaces often served a dual purpose—they supported agricultural production as well as the orchestrated sequence of views afforded by the carriage drives. To take advantage of these views, the carriage drives often pass along the margins or through the center of the open fields and pastures. During the Cone's ownership of the property, nearly 500 acres were designated for pastures and meadows that were used to pasture sheep, horses, and cattle, and for hay. Since transfer of the property to the National Park Service, many of the former pasture and meadow areas have reverted to woodland to reduce the maintenance costs associated with mowing. The National Park Service continues to manage more than 225 acres in open grass cover, some through agreements made with local farmers to use the pastures for summer grazing of livestock. Only lands that can be adequately protected against erosion and other environmental damage are considered for the leasing program. The fields and pastures that are used for grazing today are typically fenced.

The primary pastures that survive on the estate today include Flat Top Pasture behind the manor house, a large open pasture on Rich Mountain, fields and pasture north of Wadkins Road near the southeastern corner of the property, Bridge Meadow and the Horse Show Field along May View Road east of U.S. Highway 221, and adaptation of the former Flat Top Orchard north of Bass Lake as pasture. Flat Top Meadow, which surrounds the Cone Cemetery on the shoulder of Flat Top Mountain, is not fenced or used for pasture, but is cut for hay. Local farmers currently pasture beef cattle within the pastures through a lease program administered by the National Park Service. Horses are pastured near May View Road. Historically, the Cones maintained large flocks of sheep, and kept dairy cattle that provided the estate with milk products. Various shed and barns were present within the pastures to accommodate the food and shelter needs of the livestock. Only one small contemporary pump house (**one non-contributing structure**) remains in Flat Top Meadow to recall this pattern on the land.

3. Barry M. Buxton, *Historic Resource Study, Moses H. Cone Estate, Blue Ridge Parkway* (Atlanta, Georgia: National Park Service, April 1987), 3.  
4. *Ibid.*, 28.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

The stony soils associated with the Rich Mountain pastures limit the number of animals that can be on the land at any one time. This has rendered use through historic lease programs challenging, and approximately 35 percent of the original open area has been lost on Rich Mountain since the 1950s.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to the meadows, other surviving evidence of the Cones' agricultural use of the property includes the former Flat Top apple orchard now used as pasture, and very limited evidence of China and Saw Mill Place orchards. The orchards are in severe decline today but covered approximately 190 acres of the property during the early to mid-twentieth century. Today, most of the original trees have been lost to age and disease, or a lack of maintenance. Several trees survive in rows within the Flat Top Orchard, and are visible from Duncan Road. A few older trees are also evident within the younger successional woodlands of the China Orchard.

The Cones were interested in scientific farming, and their orchards were planted and cultivated according to the latest theories and practices. The trees were organized into rows that paralleled the contours of the land. They planted a combination of permanent and filler trees. As many as three filler trees were planted for every permanent tree. These were used as spacers until the permanent trees had attained a certain size. The permanent trees were planted about thirty-three feet apart. Filler trees were planted between each permanent tree, and a row of filler trees sat between each row of permanent trees. For ease of harvesting, and to promote air circulation, the trees were trained as half standards with an open crown.

The management and care of the orchards was labor intensive, requiring several applications of pesticides and fungicides throughout the spring and summer months. The sprays were mixed and stored in spray houses near the orchards to render them easily accessible. Although the buildings are no longer extant, evidence of the former spray houses exists in the orchards as foundations. One of these is present to the south of the Entrance Road east of the carriage house. A historic sprayer wagon is on display in the carriage house. Access within the orchard was afforded via Orchard Road that extended from the northern end of Bass Lake to the Entrance Road. The road is currently heavily overgrown and not in general use.

Maintaining the orchards remained challenging throughout their existence. By 1940, possibly due to the poor nature of the property's soils and the steepness of its slopes, more than one-third of the apple trees in China Orchard had died. Most of the trees have since been lost due to diminished maintenance and the encroachment of successional woodland. As reported in Ian Firth's Cultural Landscape Report of 1993, a survey of surviving apple trees conducted in 1988 and 1989 indicated that there were only 414 trees surviving in Flat Top Orchard, 122 in China Orchard, and 93 in Saw Mill Place Orchard. In 1997, National Park Service wildlife biologist Bob Cherry and ranger Julie Mullis updated the survey, finding only 140 trees in Flat Top Orchard, 74 in China Orchard, and 16 in Saw Mill Place Orchard. The numbers have continued to dwindle. However, scattered apple trees remain evident within the forested areas, while as many as 30 trees are visible within Flat Top Orchard along Duncan Road. The National Park Service has initiated some orchard restoration efforts in the Flat Top Orchard area below the manor house.

Flat Top Orchard has the largest number of living apple trees. These are located primarily along the orchard's western margin near Duncan Road and most are Ben Davis cultivars. At Saw Mill Place, the majority of the surviving trees are found at the southern end, and some are located along Black Bottom Road. The only trees that survive within China Orchard are located in the upper section near U.S. Highway 221, where there are gaps in the successional tree canopy. Orchard roads and the foundations of apple barns and spray houses survive beneath the undergrowth. A tramway that once conveyed loads of apples up the steep slopes of the orchard is no longer extant.

According to Susan Dolan, who prepared "A Fruitful Legacy: A Historic Context of Fruit Trees and Orchards in the United States, from 1600 to the Present" for the National Park Service in 2007, the sites of the Cone orchards and those trees that survive remain highly significant because they are rare specimens of early-twentieth-century apple cultivars. All of the cultivars grown at Flat Top Estate are now rare, and some are extremely rare, according to a matching of the cultivars with the *North American and European Fruit and Tree Nut Germplasm Resources Inventory* (1981).

Views and vistas are an integral part of the Moses Cone estate experience. Moses and Bertha Cone clearly considered views in the design of the property, particularly in the siting of the house, the orchestration of the carriage drives, the pastoral scenery associated with the lakes, pastures, and ornamental plantings, and the construction of viewing platforms and towers. Some of the most dramatic views were those afforded from the summits of the two peaks on the estate—Flat Top and Rich mountains. Cone not only engineered road corridors to reach the summits, he also designed observation platforms and towers that would further heighten the experience of reaching the top. From both summits, these viewing platforms afforded 360 degree views of the surrounding Blue Ridge Mountains. The design and siting of Flat Top Manor on a broad elevated knoll clearly took into

5. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 73–74.



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

consideration that availability of long views across the valley below toward distant mountains. Established after his death in 1908, the Cone Cemetery, located on the shoulder of Flat Top Mountain, also affords expansive views of the mountains. The views are emphasized and focused through the design of carefully placed evergreen plantings. From the carriage drive below, views toward the cemetery are similarly dramatic. Today, the views that originally included only trees and mountainous terrain have been altered by late twentieth century residential development associated with the town of Blowing Rock. Since 1947, reduced maintenance of pasture and meadow has led to forest growth not present during the Cone era. This forest growth serves to reduce, limit, or alter some of the designed views. It is still possible, however, to experience a wide variety of views, and many remain to provide a strong sense of Moses Cone's design intent.

Traversing the extent of the property's topography, and engaging its fields, woodlands, and ornamental planting and water features are the twenty-one miles of carriage drives that survive from the twenty-five mile system designed by Moses Cone between 1900 and 1905. Several segments were lost due to construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway and associated visitor access improvements to the property that occurred in the 1950s. The extent of woodland has expanded greatly since the Cone period of ownership due to the maturation of the plantings established by the Cones as well as successional growth that has occurred due to changes in management of the property. In many cases, the carriage drives now extend through narrow open corridors that cut through dense walls of evergreen shrubs and a ceiling formed by canopy trees. The carriage drives, however, continue to offer several opportunities to take in the expansive views of surrounding Blue Ridge Mountain scenery, particularly from the elevated terrain of Flat Top and Rich mountains and May View, along surviving pasture and field margins, and across the lakes. The alignments and features of the carriage system can still be connected to a carefully orchestrated series of views that encompassed much of the estate's nearly 3,500 acres and the surrounding rolling terrain.

As is the case today, cars were not permitted to drive on the carriage drives.<sup>6</sup> However, the public was invited to visit the property to travel on the carriage drives. Historically, the Moses Cone estate could be entered from five separate locations. These included the Entrance Road, which extended through the property between Sandy Flat Gap and the Yonahlossee Turnpike; May View Road, which crossed the Yonahlossee Turnpike; Wadkins Road, which connected to the Old Boone Road and Boone Turnpike in the far southeastern corner of the property, and Colt House Road, which arose from Shulls Mill Road in the western section of the property. Visitors generally arrived via the Entrance Road, with the western segment offering the more direct and formal connection to the manor house, or the southern gate in order to experience the views from Bass Lake. The Cones typically used this entrance as well. The southern segment of the Entrance Road is now referred to as Deer Park Road by the National Park Service.

Today, the Bass Lake entrance is gated and only open to pedestrians. The Entrance Road from Sandy Flat Gap is accessible to vehicles with permission of the National Park Service. Wadkins, Shulls Mill, and May View roads are used for farm purposes, but are gated to limit unauthorized access. Visitors to the estate generally arrive via the Blue Ridge Parkway to a parking area developed behind the manor house in the late 1950s.

Cone designed the roads on the ground, walking or driving the route of a proposed road and directing a crew to drive stakes into the ground to follow his vision. On occasion, Moses Cone is thought to have engaged a civil engineer for advice, possibly W.G. Potter of Greensboro who developed the best representation of the property in 1909.

Despite the fact that the roads led to the highest elevations on the property, they consistently followed a gentle and even grade, rarely exceeding 5 percent. To achieve this gentle grade through the mountainous terrain, Moses Cone incorporated the use of switchbacks and hairpin turns, some with a turning radius of as little as 20 feet. Cone incorporated interesting features into the experience of navigating the hairpin turns, such as dramatic views, stone walls, and ornamental plantings.

Moses Cone developed the carriage drives as a series of individual yet interconnected segments. Each road was given a distinct name that described a key feature, or was derived from the name of an individual associated with the property—either a former owner, or a contemporary estate supervisor. For the purposes of this report, the carriage drives are referred to by the road names conveyed during Cone ownership, although when not referred to by name, they are indicated as carriage drives:

- Entrance Road
- Flat Top Road
- Rich Mountain Road
- Trout Lake Road
- May View Road

6. Buxton, section 2, 27.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

- Duncan Road
- Stringfellow Road
- Black Bottom Road
- Wadkins Road
- Sunset Drive

Portions of some of these carriage drives, including connections between the Entrance Road and Wadkins Road, as well as the entire Sunset Drive corridor were destroyed by construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway. This was mitigated by construction of new segments of road by the National Park Service to connect broken networks and the establishment of an underpass beneath the Blue Ridge Parkway to link the northern and southern sections of the property.

Although some of the carriage roads may have followed the alignments of earlier farm roads, most are thought to be new alignments designed by Moses Cone. The roads were rarely straight but rather continually bent, curved, and wound back and forth across coves, ravines, mountain side and summit, presenting an ever-changing series of views. Cone also designed the road margins to accentuate the array of viewpoints and perspectives, planting trees, shrubs, and vines for visual interest or clearing to create vistas. As the carriage drives twisted and turned through the landscape, Cone presented ever-changing views of the varied landform and topography, the rock outcroppings, agricultural fields, water resources, ornamental plantings, and drama of the distant mountains. Each road was carefully planned to avoid repetition and to create picturesque effects. The roads carried visitors through forested areas where the views were short and focused on rocks, shrubs, and streams, as well as through open areas that allowed for longer views. Because the perspective of the driver changed frequently, the landscape was rarely seen in quite the same way twice. The variety of views made each road distinctive. Cone also accentuated the experience of the dramatic views by constructing switchbacks and hairpin turns that forced the carriages to slow down and thus take in the surroundings.

Today, the original designed sequence of views that characterized each carriage drive in the historic period has been affected by several of the changes that have occurred on the estate since 1947. These include the abandonment of the orchards and associated loss of apple trees and growth of successional woodland vegetation, encroachment of trees and shrubs on the former pastures and meadows, and the growth of woody vegetation within former cleared vistas. The plantings and woodlands that edged the carriage drives were scrupulously maintained, with downed timber quickly removed, understory grasses scythed, and shrubs kept tidy and pruned. The natural forest scenery remains but are no longer tidily maintained with the removal of firewood. The loss of the American chestnut tree due to an Asian blight beginning in the 1920s also affected the character of the local forests. Urban development around Blowing Rock is visible from the Esplanade, Flat Top Mountain, and Wadkins Road.<sup>7</sup>

Originally, all of the carriage roads—except for the western segment of the Entrance Road—were surfaced with hard-packed earth. Soil used to surface the roads is thought to have been acquired from a pit located within the Saw Mill Orchard along Black Bottom Road. As noted above, the western segment of the Entrance Road was macadamized to support the more formal approach to the house used by visitors, and the frequent travel in and out of the estate by the Cones. The carriage drives that led to the Saw Mill Place apple barn were later surfaced with crushed rock during Cone ownership to help protect them from the seasonal truck traffic associated with the shipping of apples. Today, the western segment of the Entrance Road is paved with asphalt, a change that was effected by the National Park Service after they acquired the property in the 1950s. The other surviving carriage drives are earth-surfaced, although in some limited locations a top dressing of crushed stone has been by the National Park Service to limit erosion.

The carriage drives were designed with a rounded crown to shed stormwater to either side of the travelway. Gutters or drainage ditches were generally established on the uphill side of the roads to convey water from the uphill side of the road to the downhill side through pipes. Drainage ditches were also sometimes added to both sides of the road as needed to prevent wash-outs. The gutters emptied at the curves in the road where the water was sent into the landscape beyond or into culverts that carried the water beneath the road through pipes which emptied into the landscape below. The original culverts were built of wood or corrugated metal. Few of the original wood culverts survive today due to the tendency of the pipes to rot. Earthenware pipes have been used by the National Park Service to replace deteriorated wooden vessels. Some of the original corrugated metal pipes survive, however. Stacked native stone that marked the culvert openings is evident along the margins of most of the carriage roads today. The extant stone headwalls are generally original to the road network. Sediment and leaves sometimes interfere with the flow of stormwater through the culverts, and can obscure the features from view.

7. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 71.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

Additional features have been added by the National Park Service to accommodate visitors traveling the carriage roads today. Small, wood, directional signs are located where roads converge. Half-log benches are placed along Bass Lake Road and between the carriage house and the terraced garden. Log hitching posts have been placed in several places where horseback riders are likely to stop such as near the Cone Cemetery and near the observation tower on top of Flat Top Mountain since 2000. There are also identity signs and other signage that indicates rules and regulations of land use to visitors.

### ***Flat Top Estate***

The resource description section that follows is based on information developed by Ian J. Firth as part of the 1993 *Moses H. Cone Memorial Park: A Cultural Landscape Report* and an initial draft National Register nomination prepared by Laura Phillips. The text is organized below in such a way as to take the reader through the sequence of arrival, parking, visiting the Flat Top Manor house and its environs, and moving outward into the landscape along the system of carriage drives conceived and built by Moses Cone during the early twentieth century. The landscape features that comprise the property collectively constitute **one contributing site (Cultural Landscape Inventory (CLI) number 550143).**<sup>8</sup>

Traditionally, visitors to the Moses and Bertha Cone estate arrived from public road corridors to one of two private entrances marked by gates and stone piers, although the property also featured three additional entrances that were used for farm purposes and other less formal needs. The Entrance Road connected these two entrances that occurred from Sandy Flat Gap to the west of the manor house and the Yonahlossee Turnpike to the south near Bass Lake. Today, the Entrance Road and its associated features survive to illustrate the way in which visitors approached the house precinct.

Both ends of the Entrance Road are marked by ornamental wrought iron gates and stone piers (circa 1900). The lower or southern entrance also features a 3-foot-high, 18-inch-wide mortared fieldstone wall with a mortared cap that follows the property boundary along U.S. Highway 221, which is the contemporary equivalent of the Yonahlossee Turnpike. The gates are double-leaf swinging iron features set between slender wrought iron posts. Each leaf is composed of a row of vertical pickets that descend in height from the center outward and are supported by top and bottom rails. Diagonal cross bracing connects the top and bottom rails of the gate. At their center is a blank shield. Above the cross bracing the pickets are linked by spiraling iron scroll work composed of a horizontal band of circles, a curvilinear iron tendril that decreases in size as it moves from the outer edge to the inner, and iron strips with curled tops attached to the uppermost section of the spikes. The Sandy Flat Gap gate is attached to two short stretches of iron fencing, while the southern gate includes a narrow opening to permit pedestrian access as the gate is generally locked to restrict public vehicles from accessing the property in this location. The gates are each edged by a pair of identical stone piers.

The Entrance Road extends from these gates to the Flat Top Manor house, traversing the historic landscape designed by Moses and Bertha Cone to highlight the natural topography, water resources, and vegetation of the region, as well as to delight visitors. The Entrance Road (circa 1900) was designed as the most formal road on the property. At 15 feet, it is wider than the other carriage drives, wide enough for two carriages to pass comfortably. The western segment of the Entrance Road was historically paved with macadam, rather than the hard-packed earth surfacing of most of the other carriage drives. Today, the western segment of the Entrance Road is paved with asphalt to facilitate access by the National Park Service and Southern Highlands Handicraft Guild craft center personnel. As designed by Moses and Bertha Cone, the road continues to be edged by plantings of deciduous and evergreen trees and ornamental shrubs. Open areas maintained as pastures and orchards were orchestrated to provide a series of designed views, including those of the manor house above. The Entrance Road, like others on the property, was also edged by drainage ditches connected to culverts used that served to convey stormwater beneath the road, and fencing to enclose adjacent pastures.

To the west of the manor house, the Entrance Road arises from Shulls Mill Road at Sandy Flat Gap near its intersection with a spur road connecting the Blue Ridge Parkway with U.S. Highway 221. As noted above, the entrance into the property is marked by an ornamental wrought iron gate edged by stone pillars, and has been paved with asphalt by the National Park Service to support administrative access to the property. Just prior to the entrance gate, a spur road arises to the east of the Entrance Road. The road provides access to a small residential complex developed by the National Park Service to serve park personnel (1958). The complex, which is screened from view by forest cover and topography, features two Mission 66-era ranger houses (**two non-contributing buildings**), connected by a short access lane. The one-story ranch-style residences are mirror-image in plan and set

8. The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) is a computerized, evaluated inventory of all cultural landscapes in which the NPS has or plans to acquire any legal interest. Its purpose is to identify cultural landscapes in the national park system and provide information on their location, historical development, character-defining features, and management. The CLI assists park managers in planning, programming, and recording treatment and management decisions. CLI forms, including maps, drawings, and photographs, are maintained in the support offices and parks.



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

at right angles to each other. At one end of each house is an open carport under an extension of the gable roof of the house; a portion of the gable roof is extended downward at the carport to enclose a storage area. The buildings have brick-faced foundations, vinyl siding, and asphalt shingle roofs. The houses have irregularly arranged wood one-over-one double hung windows and wood single panel doors. After passing through the gate, the Entrance Road passes through a wooded landscape. The road corridor is variously supported by stacked stone retaining walls and edged by low stone breast walls. Culverts marked by stone intakes convey stormwater beneath the road. Also edging the Entrance Road are sugar maples planted by the Cones during the early twentieth century; Fraser firs planted around the same time generally do not survive. As the Entrance Road approaches the manor house, it abuts the livestock pastures of the former Flat Top Orchard located to the south. Pasture fencing encloses the pasture, which is maintained by grazing livestock. To the north of the road, a long breast wall edges the Entrance Road as it approaches Flat Top Manor.

As the road approaches the house, expansive views open toward the east, and the road levels out to follow a terraced landform known as the Esplanade that features views of the house. This was one of the first road sections established on the estate by the Cones. It was used by the Cones and their guests to promenade in the evenings. The Esplanade is edged by the manor house balustrade (1913; rebuilt circa 1988), a formal wooden fence composed of dual paneled end piers connected by a balustrade with two stringers surrounding a series of balusters. The balusters are turned in the center and rounded, taper top and bottom, and capped with square caps at the stringers. The top and bottom rails are heavily molded. The balusters that comprise the balustrade are similar in architectural character to those used on the porch of the house. After acquiring the property, the National Park Service moved the feature closer to the house, and reconstructed it in the late 1980s to match the original, which had deteriorated beyond repair. The National Park Service has also added a three-board wood post-and-board fence to either side of the balustrade to protect visitors from the steep drop-off alongside the road.

Another modification to the Moses Cone carriage drive system made by the National Park Service in this area is rehabilitation of a bridle path south of and below the Entrance Drive and manor house as an equestrian alternative to the Esplanade section of the Entrance Road. This stone dust corridor includes part of a historic bridle path alignment as well as relocated sections.

The Entrance Road continues to the south of the Manor House to the carriage house and east. Beyond the carriage house, the Entrance Road continues on to the lower entrance.

### ***The Flat Top Manor House precinct***

The Manor House precinct is a collection of buildings, structures, and garden features that supported the residential and recreational activities of the property during the early twentieth century. The focal point of the precinct is the Flat Top Manor house, a large Colonial Revival dwelling set atop a small knoll that overlooks the Bass Lake valley toward the Blue Ridge Mountains and the town of Blowing Rock, North Carolina, to the south and east. The land falls away steeply at the edge of the knoll to the southeast, allowing for expansive views. The landscape around the Flat Top Manor House has an open character due to the extensive area of mown grass maintained around the house and associated buildings and garden features. The combination of the elevated terrain and grass cover create a large open precinct oriented to the views. The Entrance Road, which leads east and west from this open hillside, connects the precinct to other carriage drives that lead throughout the property.

Views from the house encompass Flat Top Orchard, established by Moses Cone during the early 1900s on the slopes southeast of Flat Top Manor as well as Bass Lake, located on axis with the house. The lake is a focal point of the view from the front porch of the house and the balustrade below. The Manor House itself is also visible from several locations around the property, including the open landscape around it, the Esplanade section of the Entrance Drive as it approaches the domestic precinct, and several designed viewpoints along the southern segment of the Entrance Road as it ascends the knoll and Duncan Road, another carriage drive that edges the Flat Top Orchard pasture to the southwest.

The Manor House precinct also features the carriage house, a relocated servants' house, terraced gardens, walks, and contemporary visitor amenities such as drinking fountains, interpretive signs, trash receptacles, a universal access ramp, parking facilities, and hitching posts established by the National Park Service. During the Cone era, the Manor House precinct was much more densely developed and included a laundry/ice house/carbide plant, croquet lawn, bowling alley, and male and female servants' quarters. In the vicinity of the carriage house were a blacksmith's shop and the home of the blacksmith, the home of property Superintendent Underdown, and another cottage that may have been used by the Cones when the Manor House was being built. Bertha Cone later built a dairy, wood barn, and various sheds in this area after the death of her husband. The majority of the precinct's buildings were demolished by the National Park Service in the 1950s to diminish maintenance duties on the property.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

Although the Cones are known not to have planted formal gardens around the house, the Manor House precinct did feature a croquet lawn, tennis court, and flower, fruit, and vegetable garden west of the house with a peony cutting garden. These features have been lost since the death of Bertha Cone due to reduced maintenance. Other Cone-era features that survive include a shaded stroll path that featured rhododendron plantings developed by the Cones—the Figure 8 Walk—which has been restored by the National Park Service for the enjoyment of visitors. The path forms a double loop, one-half-mile in length and 3 to 3-1/4 feet-wide. The trail is surfaced with hard-packed earth and crushed-stone. Larger stones often edge the trail surface. For much of its length, the walk is shaded by hardwood trees and lined with rhododendrons. It is accessed via a concrete walk that leads from a small paved parking area west of the house. The history of the trail is interpreted for visitors. The National Park Service has installed small metal signs that provide information about the Cones and the estate along the concrete walk leading to the Figure 8 Walk. These etched metal panels are set on metal posts founded within concrete footers. A “gunboard” sign (LCS 092227) also interprets the historic use of the Figure 8 Walk. Gunboard signs were installed in numerous locations along the Blue Ridge Parkway during the late 1930s through the 1950s to interpret local history. They feature a rifle and gunpowder horn near the top of the signs. The existing sign was likely installed in the mid-1950s. The gunboard signs are composed of approximately 5-foot, 10-inch high and 6-foot, 9-inches wide wood boards set between two 6 x 6 wood posts set in concrete footers. The wood is a weathered grey background with routed lettering painted white and blue.

A second gunboard sign (LCS 092227) is located adjacent to the southeast corner of the Manor House. Nearby is a historic dry-stacked stone retaining wall that edges the slope to establish a level precinct around the building. A small asphalt parking area has been developed by the National Park Service at the basement level southwest of the house for the use of park and Southern Highlands Handicraft Guild craft center personnel. A historic stone path with three stone steps leads from the parking area toward the front entrance stair. The walk, which is 3-foot, 6-inches wide and 51 feet long, is comprised of large square and rectangular-shaped native stones set in an irregular geometric pattern.

#### ***Flat Top Manor***

The Flat Top Manor house (**one contributing building**) is two stories high plus a full basement and an attic level that was built between 1899 and 1900. The main facade faces south and overlooks the grounds of the estate, with expansive views extending to Blowing Rock. The house is generally L-shaped, with the main rooms in an east-west wing at the front, and a service wing at the northeast corner. The large wood-framed Colonial Revival-style house has a porch that wraps around most of the first floor and a hipped roof covered with wood shingles.

The wrap-around first floor porch is supported on brick piers on stone footings, painted red. Between the piers, the porch skirting is enclosed by wood-framed wire mesh panels. The porch flooring is wood tongue-and-groove decking painted gray, and the ceiling is white-painted bead board. The porch is surrounded by a continuous wooden balustrade, with paneled pedestals at each pier and equal in height to the balustrade supporting painted wood fluted Ionic columns. The columns support a frieze and dentilated cornice at the roofline of the porch. Atop the roof, the pattern of square bases and balustrade is repeated, matching the porch balustrade below.

The exterior of the house is clad with wood clapboard siding and wood trim, all painted white. The corners of each wing of the house have fluted Doric pilasters, which extend from the porch floor to ceiling at the first floor, or up to a continuous frieze at the head of the second story. The frieze is topped by a dentil course. The roof overhang has exposed projecting brackets and a continuous gutter. Exposed portions of the foundation wall are generally pargeted with stucco, painted white. Wood sheds cover basement window well openings.

The windows of the house are primarily double hung, one-over-one windows at the first floor, and a mixture of twelve-over-one and nine-over-one windows at the second floor. The windows under the first floor porch have relatively simple, squared-off trim, while other windows typically have a small projecting cornice at the head. The attic dormer windows are also double hung, with semicircular-arch fanlight upper sash and single pane lower sash. The gabled dormer surround has fluted pilasters supporting cornice returns and a raking cornice; the dormer side walls are clad with unpainted wood shingles.

The primary south facade is five bays wide. At the center of the facade, curved stairs ascend from grade to a projecting semicircular bay of the porch. At the first floor is the main entrance to the house, double six-panel wood doors separated by fluted half-round pilasters from leaded glass sidelights, and with a leaded glass fanlight transom. A pair of wood screen doors, painted green, covers the primary doors. A tapered plywood ramp has been added to the porch floor in front of the doors, sloping up to the level of the door threshold. The center bay at the second floor is defined by pilasters at the wall of the building and free-standing Ionic columns that support a forward-projected portion of the frieze and roof overhang. At the wall of the building is three-part window group with a twelve-over one double hung window flanked by nine-over-one double hung windows below a rectangular transom whose muntins have the pattern of an arched fanlight. In front of this inner window group is a glazed enclosure of

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

divided light sash, aligned to the projecting frieze of this bay; most of the sash are fixed, except for a paired inward-swinging casement window at the center. Above the roof overhang and gutter is a gable with a raking cornice with dentils and a bracketed eave. The gable wall is clad with painted wood shingles, and there is a semicircular divided light window at center.

The remaining four bays of the south elevation are similar in design, with either two double hung windows or a paired double hung window group at each floor level. The first floor windows are one-over-one, while the second floor windows are twelve-over-one. There is also a single dormer window in each bay, although the dormers are not centered over the window openings below. The first and last bays of the south facade are set slightly back from the middle portion of the facade; at the east and west facing return walls are one-over-one double hung windows at the first floor and nine-over-one double hung windows at the second floor.

The west half of the first floor porch is enclosed by glass panels located just within the line of the balustrade and columns. Each panel of the enclosure has six lights of glazing above a solid wood panel. There are approximately four panels within each bay of the porch, although the arrangement of panels does not exactly align to the bays of the porch. The enclosed sun porch, room 120, is accessible from an east-facing door near the front door of the house, and a north-facing door to the western portion of the porch; however, no doors provide direct access to the interior of the house from the sun porch. The western end of the porch is extended to create a porte cochère.

The east side elevation has a slightly projecting bay at the left (south) half. This first floor porch wraps around this bay only on the east elevation. At the first floor in this bay is a single one-over-one double hung window and an exterior door that leads to the former dining room. The second floor has two twelve-over-one double-hung windows, and a single dormer window is centered on the bay. The first floor porch is two bays wide, and a portion of the balustrade in the southern bay has been removed. At this location, a non-original wood-framed bridge connects from the site walkways to the porch. North of the south bay, the east elevation an irregular arrangement of window openings corresponding to the service wing, with a paired double hung window and two single double hung windows at the first floor; a circular window and three nine-over-one double hung windows at the second floor; and two dormer windows. At the north end, the first floor extends one bay farther, with a single five-panel door in this bay. Steps descend to grade from this door opening. The lower roof area of this bay has a frieze, overhang, and rooftop balustrade matching the porch.

The west side elevation includes the porte cochère portion of the main porch; a solid brick wall used to support the west side of the porte cochère, which has four columns and an arrangement of square bases and balustrades matching the rest of the porch. Within the porch, there is no balustrade in the bay leading to the porte cochère; rather, wide steps descend to grade. The west elevation at the front part of the house has paired one-over-one windows at the first floor and paired twelve-over-one windows at the second floor, with a single dormer window centered above. The service wing of the building has a separate west-facing side elevation. This elevation has a porch across the first floor. Openings include two doors and two one-over-one windows at the first floor; one single and paired nine-over-one windows at the second floor; and a dormer at the attic. The first floor extends farther north than the second floor. Although not connected to the front porch, the first floor porch at this location has identical detailing.

The north or rear elevation of the main portion of the house has an irregular arrangement of windows and bays related to the interior arrangement of the house. At the west end, the wrap-around first floor porch continues across the north elevation. At the first floor is a paired one-over-one double hung windows. A six-panel door opening is located at a diagonal between the north elevation and west-facing return wall. At the second floor, the north elevation has a single nine-over-one double hung window and a door opening providing access to the roof of the porch. The west-facing return wall is windowless at the second floor and has a single door opening at the first floor, with a six-panel door. The central portion of the north elevation is four windows wide. The two western window openings are one-over-one at the first floor and nine-over-one at the second floor. The other two windows are wood double hung units with leaded glass infill, with an identical design at the first and second floor. The two windows with leaded glass are protected by plastic sheeting affixed to the exterior window frame. To the east is a projecting bay, corresponding to the main stairwell, with a door opening and a small one-over-one double hung window at the first floor and a Palladian window at the second floor with three fixed sash containing leaded glass panels, protected on the exterior by plastic glazing secured to the exterior frame. At the attic level, the center part of the north elevation has a wide flat-roof dormer with two groups of two window openings, each with paired, five-light casement windows. The roof of the dormer has a balustrade similar to the porch roof.

The north elevation of the service wing has an irregular arrangement at the first floor, which has two bays extending farther north than the second floor. The eastern bay is aligned to the outside edge of the first floor porch and has two one-over-one double hung windows. The second bay is under the first floor porch and also has two one-over-one double hung windows. These first floor bays are topped by a cornice, roof overhang, and rooftop balustrade matching the first floor porch, but at a higher elevation than



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

the first floor porch roof. The second floor of the service wing has two nine-over-one double hung windows, and the attic has a single dormer.

The building's main roof is covered with unfinished wood shingles. At the center of the main wing of the house, a low-slope portion of the roof (widow's walk) is surrounded by a painted wood balustrade, with a design similar to the porch balustrades. This roof area is covered with membrane roofing. Five brick masonry chimneys extend above the roof; all are painted white. The main roof drains to a perimeter hanging gutter, with painted galvanized exterior downspouts mounted to the building walls. The porch roofs drain to built-in gutters at the roof perimeter, outside the balustrades. The gutters lead to exterior downspouts mounted to porch columns.

The interior of the house at the first floor has a formal arrangement of primary rooms, with service functions in the northeast wing. Throughout the primary first floor rooms, finishes include stained and varnished hardwood flooring covered by non-original carpet; painted canvas-covered plaster walls and ceiling; painted wood baseboard, paneled wainscot, trim, and picture rail; and plaster crown molding. Interior doors are typically seven panels.

The south front doors lead to the front hall, room 101. Paired ten-panel pocket doors define openings to the music room, to the west, and the library, to the east. Pilasters and two free-standing Ionic columns define the north edge of the space, which opens to the sitting room, room 103. The sitting room finishes are a continuation of the front hall. At the north wall of the room is a red brick fireplace with projecting wood mantelpiece with a dentilated cornice and carved brackets. There is a double-hung window with leaded glass to either side of the fireplace. The east edge of the sitting room is defined by the main staircase to the second floor, described below. Both of these rooms have original gaslight chandeliers.

The music room, room 102, which opens from the west side of the front hall, has pocket doors that connect the music room to the front hall, and windows on the south and west walls look into the glass-enclosed portion of the front porch. On the west wall is the brick fireplace with painted wood surround featuring paired Ionic columns. The room has an original gaslight chandelier.

From the sitting room, the west hall, room 104, leads west and connects to the billiard room, northwest vestibule, and office. The northwest vestibule, room 106, is a small space that connects an exterior door on the porch with the west hall. The billiard room, room 105, is accessed from the west end of the west hall. It has windows on its north, west, and south walls and a fireplace on the east wall. A single door on the north side of the west hall leads to the office, room 107. This room has an exterior door to the porch at the west wall and a fireplace with a window to either side on the north wall. The west hall has an original gaslight sconce on its south wall. The billiard room formerly had gaslight sconces on the west wall and a chandelier, but the fixtures have been removed. The office has an original gaslight sconce on the east wall. There are fireplaces in the billiard room and office. Both fireplaces are red brick masonry with painted wood surrounds; the billiard room fireplace surround features free-standing Ionic columns, while the office fireplace surround includes three-quarter round pilasters. Painted wood shelving above the mantelpiece of the billiard room fireplace is likely not original. There is also a built-in painted wood paneled cabinet at the southeast corner of the office with paired two-panel doors.

The library, room 119, which opens from the east side of the front hall, has pocket doors to the front hall and dining room. A red brick fireplace with a wood surround featuring Corinthian pilasters is located at the northeast corner of the room. On the north and west walls are built-in painted wood bookcases. The original glazed bookcase doors with fanlight pattern muntins have been removed to storage. Windows on the south and east walls overlook the porch. There are five original gaslight sconces on the west, south, and north walls. The dining room, room 118, has pocket doors on its west wall to the library, a hinged door to the east hall, and a swinging door on its north wall to the butler's pantry. On the south and east walls are windows overlooking the porch. Also, the east wall has an exterior door to the porch. At the northeast and southeast corners are original built-in china cabinets; the original cabinet doors have been removed to storage. The dining room has an original gaslight chandelier and sconces. The dining room fireplace is red brick with a painted wood surround featuring free-standing composite order columns.

The dining room and sitting room are connected by the east hall, room 109. A pocket door closes off the west end of the hall. A hinged door on the north side lead to a closet (room 110), and a pocket door to the service corridor. A connection for an original gaslight sconce is present on the south wall, but no fixture is present. Within the closet, a fixed borrowed-light window with obscure glazing looks into the adjacent water closet, room 112.

The service corridor, room 111, runs north-south and connects the east hall to the kitchen, with hinged doors closing the north end and a pocket door the south end of the corridor. The floor is carpet over hardwood, the walls have vertical wood board wainscot with painted plaster above, and the ceiling is plaster. There is a gaslight sconce on the west wall. A door on the west wall opens to a small water closet, room 112, with an original porcelain toilet and porcelain sink with marble countertop and backsplash

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

supported on nickel-plated wall brackets, a gaslight sconce, and one window on the north wall. Finishes match the service corridor. Adjacent to this water closet, but accessible only from the exterior porch, is a similar water closet, room 121. The east side of the service corridor is open to the service stair up to the second floor, with stained and varnished wood treads and white-painted wood risers, and a single gaslight wall sconce on the south wall.

At the end of the service corridor is the kitchen, room 114. This room has beige sheet vinyl flooring; stained and varnished wood baseboard, wainscot, and trim; and painted canvas-covered plaster walls and ceiling. Non-original cabinets with a sink are located on the west wall; on the east wall are two original stained and varnished wood cabinets, one at the northeast corner and one near the southeast corner. The kitchen has one gaslight sconce on the east wall. There are windows on the north and west walls, and an exterior door to the rear porch is on the west wall. Doors on the south wall lead to the service corridor, basement staircase, and butler's pantry. A door on the east wall leads to the storeroom, room 115. The storeroom finishes are similar to the kitchen, with stained and varnished wood baseboard, wainscot, and trim; and painted canvas-covered plaster walls and ceiling. The floor is linoleum (probably not dating to the period of significance). The storeroom has exterior doors on its east and west walls and two windows on the north wall. At the southwest corner of the room is a small closet, and along the east wall is cast iron sink supported on cast iron legs. On the west side is a wall-hung glass-fronted cabinet.

Between the kitchen and the dining room is the butler's pantry, room 117. The butler's pantry has a ceramic tile floor of 2 inch white hexagonal tiles with a border of 3 inch square tiles. Finishes include white-painted wood baseboard, wainscot, and trim and painted canvas-covered wall and ceiling finishes. There is an original gaslight sconce on the north and the south wall. On the east wall is a porcelain sink in a marble counter/drain board supported by nickel-plated legs with a marble backsplash and an adjacent original painted wood built-in cabinet. On the west wall are painted wood built-in cabinets with drawers and wood cabinet doors below and four-light doors above. A swinging door at the south wall leads to the dining room; directly adjacent to this door is a second, smaller sink with a nickel-plate strainer rather than a basin and a marble counter and backsplash, supported on nickel-plated brackets attached to the wall. A diagonally placed door at the north side leads to the pantry, room 116. The pantry has a partially carpeted floor over old linoleum flooring laid diagonally to the walls of the room. The linoleum has a red and beige checkerboard pattern with small black squares overlaid at each cross point of the pattern. Similar to the kitchen and storeroom, the pantry has stained and varnished wood baseboard, wainscot, and trim and painted canvas-covered plaster walls and ceiling. The pantry has built-in stained and varnished wood shelves on all four walls, and a window on the east wall.

The typical finishes and trim of the first floor continue up the main staircase, identified as room 108. The center wall of the staircase, which faces west into the sitting room, is fully paneled from floor to ceiling, matching the design of the typical wainscoting. The stair treads are stained and varnished maple, while the risers are painted white. The staircase ascends north to a rectangular mid-height landing with a Palladian window, then turns and ascend south to the second floor. The stair balustrade has three painted wood balusters per tread and a stained and varnished top rail. At the mid-height landing, fluted pilasters occur at the transition from the sloped trim at each run of stairs to the level trim at the landing. At the top of the stairs, the balustrade continues around the stair opening and returns to the north wall, opening the stairwell up to the upstairs sitting room.

The second floor finishes are largely similar to the first floor, with stained and varnished hardwood flooring; painted wood baseboard, picture molding, and trim; painted canvas-covered plaster walls and ceilings; and plaster crown molding in most rooms. Unlike the first floor, most upstairs rooms do not have wood wainscot.

The upstairs stair hall, room 201, has a red brick fireplace with a projecting mantel supported on carved wood brackets and a leaded glass double hung window to either side. The room has four original gaslight sconces and an original gaslight chandelier. The west end of the stair hall has a trimmed archway to the second floor corridor, room 217, which has identical finishes and one gaslight sconce on the north wall. At the west end of the corridor, an exterior north-facing door provides access to the porch roof. In addition to typical trim and finishes, the stair hall and corridor have white painted paneled wainscot matching the first floor finishes. From the corridor and stair hall, a series of doors provide access to four bedrooms, a small sitting room, two bathrooms, a linen closet, and a service corridor.

At the west end of the second floor is bedroom 213. The north wall has the doors to the corridor and a small closet. There are paired windows on the west wall and south wall, and a red brick fireplace with a painted wood surround featuring paired half-round pilasters on the east wall. Gaslight sconces were located on the south, west, and east walls, but the east wall fixture is missing. The adjacent linen closet, room 214, at the end of the hall has built in shelves on the south, west, and north walls and a single window on the north wall.

The next bedroom, room 212, has a door to the corridor on its north wall, paired windows on the south wall, and a door to a closet on the east wall. The west wall has a door to another closet, a single window, and a red brick fireplace with a painted wood

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

surround featuring paired half-round pilasters. The room has three gaslight sconces. On the opposite side of the corridor from this bedroom are two bathrooms, rooms 215 and 216. Both bathrooms have 2 inch white hexagonal ceramic tile flooring with a marble panel under the toilet; 3 inch by 6 inch running bond ceramic tile wainscot; and painted plaster walls, plaster crown molding, and plaster ceiling. Both bathrooms have a marble sink supported on nickel-plated wall brackets with marble backsplashes, an enameled cast iron clawfoot tub, a toilet, and two original gaslight sconces. Each bathroom also has a single north-facing window and a small built-in medicine cabinet at the north wall. The tile wainscot is detailed with a few courses of decorative glazed tile (green in room 215 and yellow in room 216) and topped by a course of molded ceramic tile.

The next two rooms, sitting room 211 and bedroom 210, are directly connected by an interior door. Both rooms also open directly onto the upstairs sitting room. The bedroom has a red brick fireplace with a painted wood surround with fluted pilasters at the northeast corner. Windows are located on the south and east walls. The west wall has a door to a closet and the connecting door to the sitting room. The sitting room has a short vestibule at the entrance from the stair hall with a closet; the segmental-arched opening to the main part of the room has painted wood trim. On the south wall is a large three-part window group under a rectangular transom with muntins in a fanlight pattern. Each of these two rooms has three gaslight sconces.

At the east end of the stair hall and corridor is the master bedroom, room 207. On the west wall is a red brick fireplace with a painted wood surround with Corinthian pilasters. There are windows on the east and south walls, and the room has four gaslight sconces. On the north wall, a door leads to a small vestibule, room 208. This vestibule has doors providing access into two closets and the master bathroom. The closets are at the east and west sides; the east closet is larger and has a circular window on the east wall and a gaslight sconce on the north wall. The master bathroom, room 209, is north of the vestibule. The master bathroom has 2 inch white hexagonal ceramic tile flooring with a marble panel under the toilet. The walls have a 3 inch by 6 inch running bond ceramic tile wainscot with painted plaster above; the wainscot is detailed with a few courses of decorative pink glazed tile and topped by a course of molded ceramic tile. The ceiling is painted plaster. On the east wall is a double hung window, and on the north and south walls are gaslight sconces. The west wall has a built-in painted wood wardrobe. Plumbing fixtures include a marble sink with a marble backsplash and nickel-plated clawfoot support posts, an enameled cast iron clawfoot tub, and a toilet.

From the upstairs stair hall, a pocket door provides access to the service corridor, room 202. At the south end of the corridor, a door on the east wall leads to the stairs up to the attic. The service corridor has a painted wood wainscot of vertical wood boards and other typical painted wood trim, but no crown molding. There is an outlet for a gaslight sconce on the west wall, although the fixture is missing. At the north end of the corridor at the west wall are paired double hung windows. The service stairs reach the second floor at the north end of the corridor and have painted wood balustrade. At the north end of the corridor, doors lead to two bedrooms, a bathroom, and a wash closet. The northwest bedroom 204 has double hung windows on the north and west walls and two gaslight sconces. A door on the east wall leads to a closet. The northeast bedroom 205 is similar, with double hung windows on the north and east walls, two gaslight sconces, and a closet on the west wall. In the corridor, a door on the south wall leads to a closet containing an enameled cast iron mop sink. The bathroom, room 206, has 2 inch hexagonal white ceramic tile flooring with a marble panel below the toilet. The walls have a 3 inch by 6 inch running bond ceramic tile wainscot with painted plaster above; the wainscot is detailed with a few courses of decorative blue glazed tile and topped by a course of molded ceramic tile. The ceiling is painted plaster. On the east wall is a double hung window, and on the north wall is a gaslight sconce.

The stairs to the attic level ascend from the service corridor in the north wing of the building. The stair treads are stained and varnished, and the risers are painted white. The stairwell has painted wood wainscot and painted trim, up to the attic level.

The attic level contains a large central open space, five smaller rooms partitioned at the perimeter of the building, and one bathroom. Throughout the attic level, the spaces are finished with stained and varnished hardwood flooring; stained horizontally oriented wood bead board wall cladding; stained wood bead board ceiling cladding; and stained doors and trim. Gaslight wall sconces are present in some rooms. Where brick masonry chimneys pass through the attic level, the masonry is parged with stucco. The opening at the stairs up from the first floor are surrounded by a stained and varnished balustrade. A separated stair case ascends in the middle of the space to a roof hatch at the central flat portion of the roof.

The basement level is accessed from stairs that descend from the kitchen, room 114, as well as from exterior stairs on the north side of the house. The basement spaces typically include exposed unpainted cast-in-place concrete floors, exposed brick masonry walls and piers, and exposed wood floor framing and subfloor construction above. Several small storage rooms are partitioned from the main basement space using wood framing and plywood floor, wall, and ceiling cladding. Basement spaces are present under the first floor wrap-around porches; these spaces are not full height and have dirt floors. An exception is the tool room, located under the porch at the southwest corner of the house. This room is accessible only from an outside stairwell adjacent to the porch and is not connected to the remainder of the basement. This room has a plywood floor, exposed brick ceiling, and exposed wood framing as a ceiling.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

### *Carriage House*

To the east of the manor house is the carriage house, built circa 1899–1905), that is one of the five surviving Cone-era buildings on the property. The carriage house (**one contributing building**) is built into the hillside, with a raised masonry basement below two wood-framed levels. The foundation is built of uncoursed fieldstone masonry with beaded mortar joints. On the east wall of the basement level are five window openings and one door opening; the north and south ends each have a single window and one door opening. The basement level windows are wood four-light windows set under masonry arches built of three courses of rowlock bricks. The basement level doors slide on iron rods mounted to the exterior wall; the wood doors have a four panel frame with diagonally oriented cladding within each panel. Across the east side of the basement is an open porch supported on four wood columns. The hip roof is covered by galvanized standing seam metal. There is no porch floor, and the roof framing is exposed at the underside.

Above the basement level, the building is wood-framed and is clad with painted wood siding. There is wood trim at the corners and along the eaves, and the gable roof has cornice returns at each gable. Since the building is built into the slope, grade level access to the main level is possible from the west side. On the west elevation, the exterior has large paired wood doors that slide on iron rods mounted to the exterior wall; the wood doors have a four panel frame with diagonally oriented cladding within each panel. Behind the sliding doors, the original door opening has been infilled with a new exterior wall containing a stained and varnished wood four-panel personnel door to provide access to visitor restrooms. Across the west elevation is an open porch supported on five wood columns on stone bases. The hip roof is covered by galvanized standing seam metal. The porch floor is paved with cast in place concrete, and the roof framing is exposed at the underside.

At the main level on the east elevation are two, two-over-two wood double hung windows with horizontally oriented mullions. The south gable end has two six-over-six wood double hung windows under a continuous head trim at the main level and a Palladian window at the upper level with eight light fixed side sash and an eleven-over-nine double hung window at the center. The north gable end has a single two-over-two wood double hung window with horizontally oriented mullions at the main level and inward-swinging wood doors at the upper level.

The main gable roof is covered with standing seam galvanized sheet metal. At the center of the roof is a cupola with wood siding, a low slope roof, and a wood rooftop railing.

The interior of the basement level was used as horse stables and has a dirt floor, exposed post and beam wood structural framing, painted stone masonry walls, exposed wood joist floor construction above, and three wood-sided stalls. Original and added supplemental wood posts support the floor construction above. Wood-framed stairs at the west end connect to the main level. The main level has two modern restrooms partitioned from the southern third of the space, while the northern two-thirds is an open space, for storage of carriages, with wood flooring, walls, and ceiling. Within this space are several bead-board-enclosed ducts allowing hay or other feed to be dropped from the hayloft to the basement-level stalls. A stair at the southern portion of the floor connects to the upper level. The upper level or hayloft is unfinished except for two small rooms partitioned at the south end, with wood floors and bead board wall and ceiling finishes.

Stone retaining walls form level road corridors to the north and south of the carriage house. These walls form a relatively level terrace above the carriage house at the primary story entrance into the building. A retaining wall also takes up the change in elevation between the primary entrance and the basement, which is open to the south where the building is banked into the hillside. A carriage drive edges the lower level entrance. A wooden hitching post has been provided by the National Park Service near the lower level entrance for equestrian use. A row of white ash trees planted by the Cones follows the road corridor as it edges the carriage house. Several benches made of halved-log seats and supports have been placed along on the road around Bass Lake and between the carriage house and the carriage drive below for the use of visitors by the National Park Service.

Interpretive programs and media are offered in the carriage house for visitors as are rest room facilities.

### *Terraced Garden*

Located below the lower level entrance of the carriage house is a terraced garden designed and developed by the Cones circa 1900 to grow a wide variety of fruit and vegetables and later, flowers. The garden is formed by a series of three parallel stone retaining walls (LCS 091321) that step down the hillside east of the carriage house with the descending topography. Between the walls are four relatively level terraces, which the Cones used as garden beds. A large stone retaining wall contains the southern edge of the road above the garden. A flight of stone steps leads to the terraced garden below.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

The top wall, which is edged along the Entrance Road by a split-rail fence, is relatively tall and has stone buttresses. A steep flight of sixteen concrete steps inset with metal handrails leads from the carriage road into the garden. Two additional walls approximately 3 feet in height are located further to the south. The walls are composed of coursed granite schist rubble. The terraces between the walls are between 32 and 40 feet wide. The National Park Service has restored elements of the garden that formerly occupied the second terrace from the top, including a long metal arbor trained with climbing roses on the second terrace, and an arbor on the third terrace. Raspberries have been planted on the lowest terrace.

### *Servant's House*

On the hillside overlooking the carriage house is a third building referred to as the servants' house (**one non-contributing building**). Although constructed by the Cone family as part of the estate circa 1900, this building was relocated by the National Park Service and placed on a new foundation in the early 1950s, and has thus lost integrity. The building has a concrete masonry foundation, white-painted wood siding, and an asphalt-shingled gable roof with cornice returns. The L-shaped building has a rear addition that partially fills in the angle of the L. The front, east-facing facade has a central wood door with glazing and two four-over-four double hung windows. Across the facade is the front porch on concrete masonry foundation walls. Wood stairs ascend from grade to the porch. The porch floor is gray-painted wood planks. The porch roof is supported on four wood posts; the two corner posts are decorative turned wood, while the two center posts are square timbers with chamfered corners. The porch balustrade has turned balusters that are cut in half, so that only the outer face of each baluster has the decorative profile. The porch has a bead board ceiling and an asphalt-shingled hip roof. The south side elevation of the house has two four-over-four double hung windows, one three-over-one double hung window, and a small wood plank door providing access to the basement. At the basement level adjacent to the south wall is an air conditioning condenser sheltered by a wood-framed lean-to. The north side elevation has two four-over-four double hung windows. The rear gable end has one four-over-four double hung window. Under a rear porch are two exterior doors and one three-over-one double hung window. The L-shaped rear porch has a wood platform, a single wood post, and a hipped asphalt-shingled roof. Two red brick masonry chimneys rise above the roof. (Access to the interior was not available for purposes of this study.)

Adjacent to the servants' house is a carport (**one non-contributing structure**), likely not dating to the period of significance.<sup>9</sup> The open wood-framed structure is built of wood posts set in concrete, forming a 2 bay by 3 bay grid supporting a wood-framed gable roof structure. The gable ends are clad with plywood with applied battens, and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. At the north end is a storage enclosure defined by wood-framed walls clad with plywood with applied battens. An asphalt driveway connects the carport to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Between the servants' house and the terraced garden is a small, concrete masonry pump house (**one non-contributing structure**) with a flat concrete slab roof covered by roofing membrane. The pump house likely does not date to the period of significance. It is set into the hillside and has an east-facing wood plank door. An electrical pole with an electric meter stands adjacent to the structure.<sup>10</sup>

### *Blue Ridge Parkway*

The Manor House precinct today is one of the primary attractions for visitors to the property, particularly those traveling through the area along the Blue Ridge Parkway (**one non-contributing structure**, as it passes through Flat Top Estate). To accommodate visitors to the estate since acquiring the property in 1950, the National Park Service has established a system of concrete walks that link the Manor House precinct with a visitor parking lot located behind the house. The parking lot is accessed from a spur road leading onto the estate from the parkway. The concrete walks, which have an exposed aggregate finish, are linked to a wooden universal access ramp that leads to the Manor House from the visitor parking area. A second ramp system leads to the carriage house. The universal accessibility ramp is set on top of a historic stacked stone retaining wall behind the carriage house. Stacked stone tree wells indicate the degree of fill that was used in some places to effect gentle grades for the walks and parking area. The ramps were added during the 2000s.

The visitor parking area was built in association with the Blue Ridge Parkway circa 1955 and 1957. The Blue Ridge Parkway corridor follows a relatively level, yet elevated ridgeline below the peaks of Rich and Flat Top mountains to the north of the Flat Top Manor House. The parkway is a two-way, two-lane, 20- to 21-foot-wide, asphalt-paved road with 4- to 5-foot-wide soft, rounded, grassed shoulders. Drainage ditches parallel the road in some locations to convey stormwater to culverts and other engineered systems designed to promote motorist safety and to prevent erosion. The corridor is edged by combinations of open

9. The carport probably dates to the 1980s. Correspondence with NPS BLRI personnel.

10. Descriptions of the property's additional buildings and structures occur later in the Section 7, linked to the geographic organization of the narrative.



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

views and wooded areas comprised of native hardwoods and some evergreen screen plantings. Bridges and culverts convey the road over stream and road crossings. The road corridor affords views into the estate from a few locations, including the Moses Cone Overlook (LCS 225030) at mile post 293.5 where motorists can park their cars and enjoy a view of the Moses Cone estate. The overlook, composed of a half-moon pull-off road and a row of parking spaces edged by granite curbing, an asphalt walk, grass island, culvert, and an interpretive sign was completed in 1957. Topography, woodland vegetation, and screen plantings otherwise help to restrict views between the historic estate and the parkway. Evergreen screen plantings have been added to the margins of the Blue Ridge Parkway at the eastern end of the estate to limit views of residential development associated with the city of Blowing Rock. Bridges, overpasses, stone walls, concrete milepost markers (LCS 092225), and stone-faced concrete culverts (LCS 331569) are also associated with the road corridor as it passes through the property.

Construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway altered some sections of the carriage drive system and resulted in the loss of Sunset Drive carriage drive. Evidence of the interrupted and abandoned sections remain visible within the landscape today. In addition to Sunset Drive, the parkway altered portions of Flat Top Road, and its connection to the Manor House precinct. To reconnect the carriage drives to the north and south of the parkway, the National Park Service built a stone-faced bridge to convey the system beneath the new road near the Manor House in 1960. The bridge links the Entrance Road with the carriage drives leading to Trout Lake and Flat Top and Rich mountains north of the parkway. The bridge, constructed of poured concrete, has a 12-foot span and is faced with rusticated native stone set in a coursed pattern orchestrated around a central Roman arch. The opening is relatively narrow and barely accommodates the single lane, 10-foot-wide carriage drive, and affords only 12 feet of vertical clearance at the center of the arch.

The carriage drive system was also disrupted in 1960 when U.S. Highway 221 was widened, resulting in the demolition of a stone bridge that conveyed May View Road across the public roadway. A new underpass was built to extend May View Road beneath U.S. Highway 221 at that time.

The spur road leading to the parking area behind the manor house arises at milepost 294 of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The spur road serves as the entrance and exit of a one-way loop road system that splits soon after entering the property. The 10-foot, 9-inch asphalt-paved road is lined with rhododendron plantings, which help screen it from view from the parkway. The parking area forms an irregular oval or lozenge shape in plan. Drainage ditches convey stormwater from the pavement, and logs line portions of the road to prevent visitors from parking in the ditches. The road leads to a curved parking area comprised of several bays totaling 44 parking spaces, which are edged by concrete wheelstops and an asphalt walk. The walk connects visitors to the concrete walks, stairs, and wood ramps that offer universal accessibility to the manor house and carriage house. The Cone manor house is visible below the parking area.

The National Park Service has installed site furnishings in association with the parking area and the concrete walks for the benefit of visitors. They include composite and recycled plastic benches, an exposed aggregate drinking fountain, metal trash receptacles, metal fee collection boxes, and interpretive signs composed of fiberglass panels set within metal frames that generally date from the 1980s to 2000s.

A large green-painted oil storage container set on a concrete pad is also located along the visitor entrance road. A ladder connected to the side of the tank provides access to the opening on its top. The oil storage container was installed to support National Park Service management of the property in 1994. It replaced an underground storage oil tank likely used during the Cone era.<sup>11</sup>

### *The Cone Cemetery*

From the manor house precinct, many visitors travel by foot to visit the Cone Cemetery (1908), located approximately one half mile to the northeast atop an elevated rise on the shoulder of Flat Top Mountain within Flat Top Meadow. The cemetery (**one contributing site, CLI number 550143**) marks the final resting place of Moses and Bertha Cone, as well as Bertha Cone's two sisters, Sophie and Clementine Lindau. The cemetery is encircled by a perimeter iron fence set within a base of dressed granite, and contains a large rustic boulder monument that marks the graves of Moses and Bertha Cone and two smaller dressed granite markers for Bertha Cone's sisters. Fraser fir and Norway spruce trees were originally planted to frame the dramatic views of the Blue Ridge Mountains visible to the east from the cemetery, but the Fraser firs have since been lost to an insect infestation. The National Park Service has replanted the area with additional Norway spruce.

11. R. Meyer, Archeological Technician, "Trip report on archeological testing on five sites along the Blue Ridge Parkway, SEAC Acc. 1276, November 18-23, 1996" (Tallahassee, Florida: National Park Service, February 5, 1997), 5.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

From the manor house, the cemetery is reached by traveling north along the Entrance Road to another short carriage drive segment that leads west of the carriage house and north beneath the Blue Ridge Parkway via the stone-faced culvert built in 1960. This segment is a modification of the original carriage drive system designed by the National Park Service to mitigate the loss of portions of the carriage drive system impacted by parkway construction.

Beyond the bridge, the spur road intersects Flat Top Road in a T intersection. The cemetery is located to the east along Flat Top Road. To the north of the road is Flat Top Pasture, a historic field maintained through lease agreement with local farmers who graze their cattle on the land. Flat Top Road edges the pasture and its associated perimeter fencing, a contemporary addition composed of peeled wood posts strung with strands of barbed wire, for a short distance before entering a wooded area. Access into the pasture is afforded through a metal farm gate located near T intersection of carriage drives. A pump house is located within the pasture. This small, wood-framed building has a modified gable roof and walls clad with painted wood paneling. The pump house was built by the National Park Service to support cattle grazing activities.

East of the pasture, Flat Top Road, thought to have been another of the early carriage drives established by the Cones in 1900, winds along a lightly-wooded hillside, ascending the shoulder of Flat Top Mountain. During Cone tenure of the property, views were afforded to Trout Lake and Grandfather Mountain to the southwest from this section of the carriage drive, but these views currently blocked by woodland vegetation. Further east, as the road approaches the cemetery, the woodland gives way to an open meadow set atop a broad plateau on the shoulder of the mountain. The hard-packed earth spur road that encircles the Cone Cemetery arises from Flat Top Road in this location. The National Park Service has provided a wooden hitching post, composed of a log cross bar nailed to two notched-log posts, beneath the trees near the entrance into the cemetery from Flat Top Road for equestrian use.

The cemetery is framed by a metal fence set within a low dressed, granite-block wall with chamfered sides and interlocking ends that forms a square central space where the graves of Moses and Bertha Cone, and Bertha's sisters are located. The fence edges an area 25 feet square and is arranged along the cardinal directions. It is composed of square iron pickets, 3/4-inch square, with tapered tops set 4 inches on center and 4-foot, 1-1/2 inches high and supported by three rails. The rails are spaced evenly apart, with the highest bar set approximately 2-1/2 inches below the fence tops, the second midway between the top and bottom rails, and the third near the base of the pickets. Posts are set 8 feet on center, and are comprised of a slightly thicker and taller picket set into the granite base. The fence features cross braces that extend periodically from the top bar to the base of the 6-1/2-inch-high and 12 inch wide granite blocks. The cross braces are turned 90 degrees near the base, and anchored into the granite block base. A locked gate is set in the center on axis with the monument. The granite blocks are cut to form a step into the cemetery, and the gate is set below the level of the fence. From the cemetery, long views towards the mountains are afforded. Flat Top Road passes to the south of the Cone Cemetery and below it topographically. Perched dramatically upon a broad knoll, the cemetery is highly visible from Flat Top Road, particularly when traveling southwest toward the manor house, through the framing of the dark foliage of the evergreen tree groves.

The monument to Moses and Bertha Cone (LCS 091322) faces east with a dramatic view of the mountains. It sits centered within the fenced area, but closer to the front of the space. Formed from a slightly-battered rusticated granite shaft with a hipped peak approximately 8 feet tall, the monument is set on two stacked foundation blocks of battered rusticated granite. The lower block is approximately 8 feet long, 2 feet high, and 4-feet, 8-inches wide. The upper block is inset slightly from the lower base, and is approximately 6 feet long and 18 inches high. The sides of the base and platform are rusticated, while the tops have flared beveled aprons to shed water. Two bronze plaques with raised lettering that note this as the graves of Moses and Bertha Cone are set atop one another in the center of the boulder. The top boulder is etched in its center with a large groove where the plaques are inset. On the west side of the monument, a large bronze plaque bears an inscription reprinted from the *Charlotte Observer* on December 10, 1908, two days after Moses Cone's death. Bertha's ashes were added to the cemetery in 1948.

Behind the Cone monument and to the east along the back fence line are two low dressed granite markers with angled faces and a curved top. These are the grave markers of Bertha Cone's two sisters. The stones have a decorative floral carving that frames the text and follows the shape of the carved stone. Bertha Cone's sisters lived with her after the death of Moses. Their ashes were interred in the cemetery upon their deaths—Clementine in 1945 and Sophie in 1948.

### ***Flat Top Mountain***

Continuing along Flat Top Road east of the Cone Cemetery, in the northeastern corner of the historic district, lies one of the two mountain summits that fall within the Flat Top Estate Historic District—Flat Top Mountain. The peak constitutes the highest elevation within the district at 4,558 feet AMSL. The carriage drive system designed by Moses Cone continues to the summit of Flat Top Mountain where Cone established a chestnut observation tower in 1900 to take advantage of the dramatic 360 degree views available. In 1954, the National Park Service removed the earlier structure due to safety concerns, and built a new steel

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

tower in the same general vicinity to perpetuate this viewing opportunity. The steel structure was also used by the National Park Service as a fire tower.

To reach the summit of Flat Top Mountain, Flat Top Road travels northeast, passing through the broad open space of Flat Top Meadow, which is maintained through haying. In addition to the mountainous scenery afforded to the east, the road offers views of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the west as it approaches the more steeply-sloped terrain associated with Flat Top Mountain. Along the eastern edge of the meadow lies Big Spring, a water source noted on historic maps of the property. Beyond Big Spring to the north, the terrain begins to rise and the carriage drive passes into a wooded landscape edged in places by fencing indicative of former pasture uses. One of the property's four wooden kissing gates, a historic fence type, is located along Flat Top Road. Kissing gates are composed of board fencing set in a U or V shape that allows passage by pedestrians, but is too constricted for livestock and vehicles to navigate. The road continues to wind through the landscape, twisting and turning to mediate the steeply-sloped terrain at a relatively even grade. As part of Cone's design, broader views of the landscape are afforded at several locations along the route, including many of the fourteen single and one double switchbacks. The double switchback navigates a narrow ridge from which travelers can view long distances to the south and east. As it reaches the summit of the mountain, the carriage drive winds more frequently, and is edged and supported by several stone walls. The walls, which vary greatly in height, generally are composed of relatively flat stones laid in a series of courses topped with larger capstones.

Atop the mountain stands a steel observation tower that allows for 360 degree views of the Cone estate and the surrounding Blue Ridge Mountains, as well as the town of Blowing Rock. The National Park Service has provided a wooden hitching post at the base of the tower for visitors arriving on horseback. The observation tower perched atop Flat Top Mountain is a steel superstructure composed of four structural steel members connected by bracing and cross bracing. It is approximately 40 feet tall, and 25 feet square in plan. Six flights of stairs, each with eight 2-1/2-foot wide steps that are broken by landings, lead to a platform at the top that is enclosed within channeled steel railings. The four structural steel members are anchored in and bolted to low pyramidal concrete footers, 3 feet wide at the base, and tapered to 2 feet in width. The structural members are set at an angle, and the tower tapers towards the top. The views from the structure are expansive. Trees in the foreground that have grown up since the Cone era partially obscure the views.

The contemporary observation tower replaced a structure built on top of Flat Top Mountain by Moses Cone. The Cones referred to the tower as the Observatory. An article published in the August 13, 1932, issue of the *Blowing Rocket* noted that six states were visible from the lookout tower on a clear day. While the article was an exaggeration, it was likely possible to view across North Carolina and into Tennessee from the structure.

### **Trout Lake**

After returning from Flat Top Mountain, visitors can continue west to the Trout Lake Road (also known historically as Lake Road), which leads to Trout Lake and Rich Mountain Road, the carriage drive that ascends the property's other mountain summit.

Trout Lake Road arises from Flat Top Road west of the parkway T intersection. The western segment of Flat Top Road was developed by the National Park Service to mitigate the loss of historic carriage drives impacted by Blue Ridge Parkway construction. It crosses Flannery Fork Road, an unimproved public road corridor that extends northeast through the property from Shulls Mill Road, before joining Trout Lake Road.

Trout Lake Road is primarily wooded. As the carriage drive follows the margins of the lake, visitors enjoy filtered views of the water through mature woodland vegetation. The drive crosses the lake's dam and a small drainageway via wooden bridges set on stone and concrete abutments that are replacements of Cone era structures. Although it historically formed a loop around the lake, the southwestern segment of the drive has been lost due to construction of a contemporary access road by the National Park Service.

Trout Lake lies along the western margin of the estate at the foot of Rich Mountain. The 15-acre water body was established by Moses Cone circa 1905 through the impoundment of two forks of the Flannery Fork stream corridor. The lake forms an irregular oval and has a maximum depth of 23 feet. Like Bass Lake, the Cones established a carriage drive to circumnavigate the lake. Unlike Bass Lake, the banks of Trout Lake were planted with rhododendron by the Cones and maintained under wooded conditions.

Trout Lake's original earthen dam, which is shorter and narrower than the Bass Lake dam, had a clay core. Associated with the dam, Moses Cone built a rustic, mortared, stone-lined spillway that could be used to remove excess water from the lake, and a sluice gate to allow the lake to be drained. In 1916, the central portion of the Trout Lake dam was washed out by heavy rains

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

associated with a hurricane. It was not rebuilt until 1952 when crews working on the Blue Ridge Parkway restored and refilled the lake. A 1983 survey by the Bureau of Reclamation had found the dam to be deficient in meeting the Federal Guidelines for Dam Safety. The lake was subsequently drained again, and the National Park Service developed plans to improve the dam that were completed in 1990.<sup>12</sup> The National Park Service also stocked the lake with trout for fishing at that time. Although the dam remains covered with mown grass as it was historically, there is equipment located at the base of the dam, including a manhole cover and chain link fencing set in concrete walls as a safety valve, that are not consistent with the historic character of the structure. Also constructed in conjunction with the 1990 dam improvements was a low bridge at the western end of the structure. The bridge features I-beams set on concrete, stone wall abutments, and a wood deck with wood timber guard rails crosses over the surviving historic stone spillway.

Since acquiring the property, the National Park Service has developed a public entrance for visitors to easily reach the lake without traveling on the carriage drives. The development includes an access road and associated parking area. The one-way access road arises near the intersection of Shulls Mill and Flannery Fork roads and was formed from the construction road used to renovate the dam in 1990. The road follows the original route of the Trout Lake Road along the southwestern section of the lake before leading to a parking area near the northwestern lakeshore that is hidden from the lake by trees. The lot forms a loop, with two parking bays separated by a planted area. The National Park Service has built new trails to connect the contemporary visitor parking area with the carriage drive system.

### ***Rich Mountain***

Rich Mountain Road arises from Trout Lake Road at the northern end of Trout Lake. The carriage drive, designed by Moses Cone during the early twentieth century, travels initially through a wooded and steeply-sloped landscape of coves and ravines and later across open pastures before spiraling around the conical form of the mountain to its summit. Rich Mountain is located in the northwestern corner of the historic district. It features a knoll that reaches a height of 4,360 feet AMSL, and an adjacent elongated ridgeline that tops 4,200 feet AMSL. Several stacked stone retaining walls, constructed as part of the original road design, support and edge the road. The Cones designed the road to traverse a variety of field and forest landscapes. Unlike Flat Top Mountain, where views were afforded at many points along the carriage drive, Rich Mountain Road is more internally focused as it ascends the summit and expansive views are afforded only from a viewing platform.

After its intersection with Trout Lake Road, Rich Mountain Road quickly crosses a small stream north of Trout Lake via a small wood plank bridge with wood decking. The bridge, which is 16 feet wide and 10 feet long, is set atop a flared timber retaining wall abutment. Although the bridge is consistent with the original design for carriage road bridges established by Moses Cone in the early 1900s, the wood timber abutments are a later National Park Service replacement. Further upslope, the drive passes the Cascade Pool, a constructed water feature built circa 1905 within a hairpin turn associated with Rich Mountain Road. The pool contains water from a small stream directed into a mortared, stone-lined basin. Stone walls extend along the road and enclose the pool to the east. The walls are approximately 3-feet, 7 inches wide and 3-feet, 6 inches tall in the center, tapering to meet the ground at the ends. A squared-off opening in the stone wall provides access to a set of stone steps below the pool; water cascades over the steps and into a channel that continues beneath the road. Logs have been placed over the stone steps and cascade area by the National Park Service for visitor safety. These logs partially obscure views of the cascade.

Northwest of the Cascade Pool, a metal farm gate that extends across the road is intended to exclude cattle pastured on the southern section of Rich Mountain Road. A narrow wooden board gate adjacent to the metal gate permits pedestrian access to the carriage drive. Cattle are pastured in fields located beyond the gate on the eastern and southern slopes of Rich Mountain and are contained by fencing composed of wood posts and strands of barbed wire.

North and west of the gate, the terrain opens up to reveal the broad open pastures to the east and south of the mountain summit. The pastures are fenced with wood post and barbed wire as well as five board post and board fencing. The road continues through the southern pasture near its intersection with Colt House Road, a farm access road used by Moses Cone to provide access to his farm manger's house. After passing through the meadow, the road again enters wooded terrain. The carriage drive was historically designed to feature a glimpse of Grandfather Mountain to the southwest at this point, but successional woodland currently obscures this view.

Continuing northward, the road passes a contemporary wooden stile that provides access to North Carolina's Mountains to Sea Trail, which traverses a portion of Rich Mountain. The stile, which is composed of log steps nailed to an angled log frame, crosses an existing post and wire pasture fence. Nearby to the north, the carriage drive intersects a road trace that historically led

12. Southeast Archeological Center, "Report on the Archeological Surveys of Bass Lake and Trout Lake, Moses H. Cone Memorial Park, Watauga County, Blue Ridge Parkway, North Carolina" (Tallahassee, Florida: National Park Service, September 6, 1989), 2.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

to one of the two deer parks established by Moses Cone on the property, but abandoned by the 1920s.<sup>13</sup> Access to the road trace, labeled "Road to Keeper's House" on the 1909 Potter map of the property, is currently limited by a wooden board gate. A small building was once located along the road to house the deer park manager, but has since been lost. The road is indicated on the map as spiraling to the top of a small knoll. The road trace survives today as a hard-packed earth corridor. Bertha Cone is known to have pastured sheep within the former deer park after the deer were removed. Today, the area continues to be used to pasture beef cattle through lease agreements between the National Park Service and local farmers.

After passing the road trace to the former deer park, Rich Mountain Road begins to climb the steeper wooded slopes of the mountain summit. Like Flat Top Mountain Road, Rich Mountain Road is supported by stacked stone retaining walls as it traverses the sloped terrain. Culverts and ditches carry stormwater along and beneath the road to protect it from washouts. In all, thirteen stone walls are associated with the Rich Mountain Road corridor, including retaining walls that support the road corridor, walls that direct stormwater, and walls forming an observation platform on top of the mountain. Some of these walls are relatively low, while others extend several feet in height. As the carriage drive approaches the Rich Mountain summit, it follows an ever tightening concentric path. Stacked stone retaining walls frequently edge the road corridor near the summit. The National Park Service has rebuilt sections of these walls to repair damage caused by tree roots and other problems.

The Cones are known to have planted white ash and sugar maple trees along the road within the forest near the summit of Rich Mountain to enhance the character of the views associated with the road corridor. Many of these survive today.

As it reaches the mountain summit, the carriage drive spirals three times before terminating in a stone-lined viewing platform, which was established by the Cones between 1899 and 1905. Panoramic views of the estate and surrounding mountains are afforded from the summit, although successional vegetation now blocks portions of the views to the west. The observation platform that sits atop Rich Mountain is a grass-surfaced plinth approximately 40 feet long and 20 feet wide, and surrounded by a 3-foot-high stone retaining wall. Stone steps lead to the top of the grass platform, affording visitors an opportunity to take in views in most directions.

#### ***Colt House Road***

Returning south from the summit of Rich Mountain, visitors can travel south along the Colt House Road, which connects Shulls Mill Road and Rich Mountain Road. Colt House Road was developed by Moses Cone to provide access to one of the dwellings that housed farm workers. The road traverses the pastures on the eastern slopes of Rich Mountain below its summit. These are the most extensive surviving pastures on the property. Due to stony soils and steep slopes that are less well suited to grazing livestock, this pasture has begun to revert to second growth woodland. The pasture contributes to the expansive views from the grass platform atop Rich Mountain, representing an important part of the designed experience of Rich Mountain Road. Colt House Road also passes Rich Mountain's southern pastures before entering a wooded area and reaching Shulls Mill Road. The National Park Service has gated Colt House Road at Shulls Mill Road to prevent visitor automobiles from reaching Rich Mountain Road. A pedestrian gate allows visitors to access the carriage drive on foot, and an interpretive wayside provides information about the property at this intersection. The Trout Lake access road exit is also located at this intersection.

#### ***Sandy Flat Gap***

The segment of Shulls Mill Road that extends south from its connection with Colt House Road and the Trout Lake access road to intersect Flannery Fork Road falls within the historic district boundary. The road continues beneath the Blue Ridge Parkway via a single-span, reinforced concrete, rigid frame arch bridge (LCS 403934) constructed at milepost 294.6 as part of the Blue Ridge Parkway corridor through the area in 1957 as an overpass for the public road corridor. The bridge, which is 36 feet long with a 30-foot-wide deck, is faced with heavy stone masonry composed of native rusticated stone set in a coursed pattern. The central opening through which Shulls Mill Road travels is formed by a broadly elliptical radial Roman arch. The bridge also features stone faced abutments and spandrel walls. The stone guard wall that edges the road corridor is 2 feet high.

The road thereafter passes a level plateau known as Sandy Flat Gap. Several features are located at Sandy Flat Gap including the National Park Service's Sandy Flat Maintenance Office, the western segment of the estate Entrance Road, a highway rest area, and the Sandy Flat Missionary Baptist Church.

The Sandy Flat Maintenance Office is ranger station and maintenance facility related to the Blue Ridge Parkway. The National Park Service developments, which are generally screened from view from nearby roads and Flat Top Estate Historic District, includes several buildings that house offices, equipment, and materials associated with upkeep of the road corridor and the Moses

13. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 68.



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

Cone property. They include a ranger station office building, insecticide storage building, vehicle storage building, historic preservation workshop, and pole shed (**two non-contributing buildings, three non-contributing structures**). The buildings were variously constructed between 1980 and 2002.

Beyond the maintenance complex, Shulls Mill Road intersects a spur road associated with the Blue Ridge Parkway and then forms a T intersection with U.S. Highway 221. The western segment of the Moses Cone Entrance Road also arises from the spur road. This road configuration was developed as part of the Blue Ridge Parkway circa 1955–1957.

### *U.S. Highway 221*

West of the intersection of Shulls Mill Road and U.S. Highway 221 sits the Sandy Flat Missionary Baptist Church (**one contributing building**), constructed in 1908 on land donated by Moses and Bertha Cone. The church, which supported the educational needs of Cone estate workers during the early twentieth century as a schoolhouse, continues to support an active congregation today. After school consolidation resulted in the closing of the school in 1927, Bertha Cone repurchased the property and allowed the Sandy Flat Missionary Baptist Church congregation to begin using the building. The south side of the building faces the highway, but the building design is symmetrical around an east-west axis. The building has a brick masonry foundation parged with stucco and scored to resemble random ashlar masonry, wood shingle siding (portions of which have staggered coursing), and an asphalt-shingled roof. The building has a T-shaped plan, with the hip-roof west wing forming the top of the T, and the gable-roof east wing forming the stem of the T. At each inside corner of the T-shaped plan is a shed-roof enclosed vestibule. The building has two red brick chimneys. Most of the windows are two-over-two double hung units with patterned glass.

The south side of the building has two windows in the west wing and one window in the east wing; there are also two small vent openings at the foundation. The south vestibule between the wings has two square single-light clear-glass windows facing south and a six panel wood door facing east; there is a small attic vent above the door close to the roofline. A concrete stoop with painted steel railings ascends to the door from grade. The east face of the building is a gable end; the eave is continuous across the facade to form a pediment. At the main level are two windows, and there is a circular louvered vent at the gable. At the foundation on this facade is a small vent opening. Similar to the south side, the north side has two windows in the west wing and one window in the east wing; there are also one small vent opening at the foundation. The former north vestibule between the wings has two single-light clear-glass windows facing north; the east face has no windows but a small attic vent close to the roofline. At the foundation of the vestibule is an access door. The west side of the building has a window at the south part; a central shed-roof lean-to with windows facing north and south; and a non-original door with transom at the north part. The door is sheltered by a gabled porch roof, supported on unpainted wood posts that are part of a wood disabled access ramp structure that descends from the door opening to the gravel parking lot.

On the interior, the building has tongue-and-groove hardwood flooring and painted bead board wall and ceiling cladding. Door and window trim includes bull's-eye corner blocks.

Wide, six-panel pocket doors divide the building into two primary original spaces. The south vestibule opens to both rooms with five-panel doors; there are two, two-light borrowed light windows from the vestibule to the eastern room. The western room remains one open space and contains fixed painted wood pews, a free-standing cast iron wood stove, and pendant light fixtures. The original eastern room has been subdivided to create three classrooms. Accessible from the eastern room are two toilet rooms created by partitioning the former north vestibule.

Also located within the historic district boundary along U.S. Highway 221 across the road from the church is a state-administered public rest area. Accessed via a service road and parking area, the rest area features a small contemporary comfort station and utility building (**two non-contributing structures**). The comfort station is located at the north edge of the parking area. It has a brick-faced foundation, wood panel siding with vertical grooves (T-111 siding), and an asphalt shingle gable roof with hanging prefinished steel gutters and downspouts. The south side of the building has paired glass entrance doors and four single-light windows. There are ventilation louvers at the gable ends. The restroom building was constructed in 1955 and extensively renovated in the early 1980s. The small utility building has a concrete foundation, concrete masonry walls 32 inches high above the foundation, upper walls clad with wood panel siding, and a gable roof covered with asphalt shingles.

### *Duncan Road*

Returning to the Flat Top Estate Historic District property, traveling in an easterly direction, the visitor encounters Duncan Road at an intersection of the Entrance Road near the former Flat Top Orchard. Duncan Road, which was named for Cone property supervisor G.H. Duncan, travels south and east through the southern half of the estate, connecting first to May View Road, and

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

later to Bass Lake Road near the contemporary National Park Service visitor access road and parking area. The Duncan Road corridor is generally wooded with narrow views occurring primarily along the road corridor. As the road passes the pastureland associated with the former Flat Top Orchard southwest of the manor house longer views are afforded. One of the four kissing gates is located in association with the pasture fencing along Duncan Road.

Moses Cone is known to have planted rows of tulip poplar trees along the southern section of Duncan Road as well as Fraser firs near its intersection with Bass Lake Road. Many of the tulip poplars survive today, but most Fraser firs have been lost to a pest infestation. There are also several stacked stone walls that support the road as it traverses some of the more steeply-sloped terrain. Some of the walls are as tall as 4 feet. Culverts comprised of corrugated metal pipes with stone headwalls are used to convey stormwater from ditches that parallel the road on its uphill side. Another long stone wall edges the intersection of Duncan Road and Bass Lake Road. The wall begins at grade, and rises to approximately 3 feet in height. The wall is composed of thin slabs of native rock. It has been referred to as the "spite wall" in historic accounts of the property, although the source of the name and its meaning is not currently known.

### ***May View Road***

May View Road arises from Duncan Road in the southwestern part of the historic district. After approximately ¼-mile, it passes through an open pasture used to graze horses. The pasture is contained within contemporary wood post and wire fencing. At the edge of the pasture, May View Road descends into a ravine where it is crossed by U.S. Highway 221. A narrow stone-faced bridge conveys the highway over the carriage drive. The bridge is a concrete structure with vertical walls and a flat span. The outer embankment walls of the bridge are faced with stone set in a random ashlar pattern. Vertically oriented stones span across the opening, supported by the concrete bridge structure. A single course of long rectangular stone forms the cap. The opening is squared and narrow, and there is little excess space along the margins of the 10-foot-wide carriage drive. The concrete surface is visible on the inside of the bridge span. The existing overpass replaced a historic stone bridge built by Moses Cone to convey May View Road over the Yonahlossee Turnpike. The stone bridge was demolished and replaced with the existing concrete structure when the road was widened circa 1960s. May View Road was historically one of the five entrances into the estate.

Beyond the bridge, May View Road winds its way uphill again, through wooded areas that compress views along the road corridor. Near the property's boundary, the drive forms a loop that follows the margins of a dramatic and steeply-sloped mountain escarpment where views open up across a deep valley to additional Blue Ridge Mountain peaks to the south and west beyond. A stone retaining wall, original to the design of the drive, supports a long section of the carriage drive in this location. White ash trees planted by Moses Cone line portions of the road corridor. Arising from the carriage drive is a later spur road addition that connects May View Road with the public road corridor known as Laurel Lane.

South of its intersection with May View Road, Duncan Road continues southeastward, edging the property's southern boundary for more than a half mile before intersecting the Entrance Road. Near the intersection, a rock retaining wall and rows of sugar maples edge the road. These were established by the Cones during the early twentieth century.

Near the Entrance Road, a flight of stone steps lead down the hill from the gated entrance. This historically served as the route into the property for pedestrians. The cut stone steps are edged by a peeled log handrail and extend through a low stacked stone retaining wall.

### ***Bass Lake***

East of the intersection of Duncan Road and the Entrance Road lies Bass Lake. The 21-acre lake was built circa 1905 based on the specifications of Moses Cone. It lies on axis with the manor house, and there are reciprocal views afforded between the two features. The lake occupies the valley below the manor house in the south central portion of the estate. The lake is formed from the impoundment of two perennially-flowing branches of Middle Fork of the New River. Moses Cone used an earthen dam with a clay core to establish the lake, which reaches a total depth of 30 feet. Cone also constructed a spillway composed of two parallel mortared-stone channels to accommodate overflow and fitted the lake with a sluice gate to allow it to be drained. Within the lake, Cone designed a small island with a picturesquely-irregular outline as a focal point. The island was originally grass-covered but has since become wooded. The Cones planted water lilies (*Nymphaea odorata*) in the shallows along the northern end and the lake was traditionally kept stocked with fish.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

In 1942, the lake was drained and reconditioned.<sup>14</sup> In 1986, an ice flow on the surface of the lake damaged the dam gate, which led the National Park Service to drain the lake. A 1983 survey by the Bureau of Reclamation had found the dam to be deficient in meeting the Federal Guidelines for Dam Safety. After the lake was drained, plans were made to renovate the dam to meet federal standards.<sup>15</sup> In 1990, the 500-foot-long, 30-foot wide dam was renovated to meet current safety standards, and the sluice gate updated. The spillway remains intact from the historic period and the renovated dam continues to be covered with mown grass as it was historically, perpetuating its original character. In other places, however, the banks of the lake are more wooded than the Cones maintained them historically. After the dam repairs were completed, the National Park Service restocked the lake with fish, and Bass Lake continues to be used for fishing today.<sup>16</sup>

Bass Lake Road encircles the lake, crossing the drainageways and stream corridors that feed the water body via rusticated stone bridges. The road is a relatively level corridor edged by rows of sugar maple trees planted approximately 30 feet on center to either side of the road. From the carriage drive, views of the lake are afforded through the regular openings between the widely-spaced tree trunks. The carriage drive has been surfaced with crushed aggregate screenings by the National Park Service to support heavy visitor use. The land uphill from the carriage drive has been graded into a regularly-sloped bank, helping to contain the space of the lake and adjacent road corridor.

The lake margins were historically maintained in grass cover. The hillsides surrounding the lake were planted with ornamental trees and shrubs by Bertha Cone, who expanded them after Moses Cone's death in 1908. The plantings included several groves of evergreen trees and drifts of ornamental shrubs such as large beds of white Pee Gee hydrangeas (*Hydrangea paniculata* var. *Grandiflora*) west and south of the lake. The southwest side of the lake was visible from the manor house, and the large blocks of plantings were likely designed for impact as part of this view. The shrub bed on the south side of the lake survives and continues to provide an impressive display of blossoms each summer.

The conjoined Bass Lake Road and Entrance Road carriage drives cross the lake's spillway on the east end of the dam via a rusticated stone bridge with humped sides and a double arch marking the underside of the span established by the Cones. The stone parapet wall rises from 17-inch-square piers. The northern pier is 28 inches tall, while the southern pier is 19 inches in height. The parapet wall curves upward toward a height of 46 inches at the center. The bridge is approximately 46 feet long and 23 feet wide.

Bass Lake Road crosses other small drainages that empty into the lake via three additional stone bridges that are similar in design yet smaller and lower, and with only a single arch, as the double arch bridge associated with the spillway crossing. The first of these bridges crosses a drainageway that empties into Bass Lake at its far western end. The bridge is mortared stone rubble, native uncoursed stone, with a widened circular arch in the center. It includes two parapet walls that are rounded and highest in the center. The guard walls meet the ground flush at the end of the structure. This bridge is otherwise similar in size and scale to the bridge located near Heart Pond.

The second stone-faced structure is a culvert with low rounded parapet walls that curve with the road corridor. The stone used in this bridge is smaller than that present in the other three stone bridges around the lake. This structure is located to the southeast of the visitor parking area associated with the lake.

The third bridge is located at the outflow of a pair of heart-shaped pools referred to as Heart Pond located at the head of Bass Lake. The bridge conveys the carriage drive across the stream via wood decking. The uphill side does not contain a parapet wall, but is open to the base of the stone-lined pools. The southern side of the bridge has a mortared rubble guardrail with a central round Roman arch. The top of the guard rail is set 1 foot 11 inches above the decking at the center, and is slightly curved along the length of the bridge; the guard walls meet the ground flush at either end. The stone side of the bridge is 27 feet, 5 inches long, while the side that edges the stone pools is 16 feet, 8 inches long. The bridge is wide enough to convey the carriage drive with little excess space to either side. The bridge appears to be original to the Cone family period, although the stone has been repointed over the years. From the bridge, views are afforded to the house on the hillside above.

Bertha Cone is known to have ordered the construction of Heart Pond after 1909. Although the exact construction date is not known, the feature appears on a 1940 map of the estate. A channel extends between the pools to drain them and through the arched opening of the stone-faced bridge described above. The pools form two halves of a heart shape in plan. They are

14. Southeast Archeological Center, "Report on the Archeological Surveys of Bass Lake and Trout Lake, Moses H. Cone Memorial Park, Watauga County, Blue Ridge Parkway, North Carolina" (Tallahassee, Florida: National Park Service, September 6, 1989), 2.

15. Ibid.

16. Buxton, section 2, 34.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

irregularly oval along their outer margins, and linear through the center. The central margins parallel one another approximately 4 feet 10 inches apart. The pools are 32 feet wide at their ends. The mortared stone walls that frame the pools are approximately 4 feet high, 18 inches wide, and 125 feet long. Larger stones anchor the ends of the parallel central walls. Between them at the bridge, they are connected at an arched opening. The pools were once stocked with trout and fed by a mountain spring.<sup>17</sup> The pools are now watered by pipes entering from a nearby perennial drainageway. The pools were repaired in the early 1990s by volunteers with the Youth Conservation Corps. The manor house is visible on the hill above the pools.

A gate at the head of the pools provides access to the pasture associated with Flat Top Orchard. Set within the orchard to the north is Upper Pond, built by the Cones in 1909. Although the pond provided some visual interest sited as it was between the manor house and Bass Lake, its main purpose was to trap sediment from the stormwater flowing through the orchard before it could reach Bass Lake. Upper Pond was built with an earthen dam. A low stone retaining wall and trees surround the pond, and a wood-decked bridge consistent with the original design for carriage road bridges established by Moses Cone in the early 1900s crosses over its spillway at the southeast corner. Over time, Upper Pond has slowly filled with sediment, and today is approximately half of its original size. Successional woodland growth is also infringing on the margins of the pond. A cattle pen is located north of Upper Pond.

A boat house once stood on the east shoreline of the lake, but only the stone and concrete foundation remains today. The foundation indicates that the structure was two stories in height, with the upper story at grade with the road, and the lower story at the elevation of the lake. The current ruin includes a 6-foot-tall, 25-foot-long, 10-foot wide, L-shaped mortared and battered stone retaining wall that edges Bass Lake Road. A flight of 6 stone steps leads to the lower level of the structure, and a concrete landing that extends to the lakeshore. It is set within a low retaining wall that ranges in height from 18 inches to 3 feet. The stairs are also edged by a cheek wall. The foundation and side wall ruins edge a rectangular embayment of the lake. On the hillside above the boathouse ruins is a flight of 12 stone steps. These apparently led to a building that is no longer extant.

#### *National Park Service Access Road, Parking, and Amenities at Bass Lake*

Bass Lake is also accessible to the public from a spur road and parking area that arises from U.S. Highway 221 east of Laurel Lane. In addition to the access road and parking area, the National Park Service has developed stone-dust paths, a comfort station, and site furnishings to accommodate visitors. The comfort station (noted as restrooms on the map) (**one non-contributing structure**), which was completed in 2009, is located near the entrance to the present-day public parking area west of Bass Lake off U.S. Highway 221. This building was constructed on a concrete masonry foundation, with cellulose fiber-cement (HardiPlank) siding and a hip roof covered by asphalt shingles. Gabled dormers with ventilation louvers are located on the north and south faces of the roof. The two entrance doors are located on the east elevation under a gable-roof porch, and a band of horizontal windows wraps from the front onto each side of the building.

#### *Entrance Road*

The continuation of the Entrance Road leads north from the Bass Lake dam crossing toward the manor house. The road ascends several hundred feet while providing visitors with a tour of many of the estate's primary landscape features and periodically offering glimpses and views of the manor house set atop a prominent knoll above. It passes Bass Lake, evergreen plantations, ornamental shrub plantings, Flat Top Orchard, and the former Deer Park tree before ascending the ridgeline where the manor house and carriage house are located.

#### *Flat Top Orchard*

Beyond its intersection with Bass Lake Road, the Entrance Road passes through evergreen plantations established by the Cones in the valley below the manor house. The Cones desired to be good stewards of the land, hoping to improve its health and appearance by planting tree plantings as well as native forest species. They planted extensive plantations of conifers, including white pine, as well as Fraser fir, Norway spruce, and hemlocks in the Bass Lake valley. Bertha Cone is known to have continued the work of Moses Cone in this area, planting a double line of hemlocks circa 1916 on the north side of Bass Lake. As with other features of the estate, the Cones designed the composition of the plantation. At first, they planted the trees relatively widely apart at between twenty and thirty feet on center, but later moved to a more tightly spaced interval and a grid pattern. The understory of the plantation was similarly considered. It is thought that the Cones planted grasses underneath the evergreens, and maintained them with regular scything.

17. Ibid., 3.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

Today, most of the hemlocks are dying due to an infestation of hemlock wooly adelgid. Some of the trees are in decline, and deciduous hardwood saplings have since grown up beneath the conifers, altering the original character of the stands. The plantations otherwise survive with a good degree of integrity.

North of the evergreen plantation, the Entrance Road edges Flat Top Orchard, characterized by open pasture. Views are afforded across the pasture to the manor house from the road. The pasture is the site of the former Flat Top Orchard, an 82-acre area planted by the Cones between 1898 and 1900 in fruit trees. Flat Top Orchard was laid out on the slope below the manor house on axis with Bass Lake in view of the dwelling and once contained more than 12,300 trees. Flat Top was one of three orchards planted on the estate by the Cones by 1900. The other two orchards include China Orchard, located on the scarp face of the Blue Ridge Mountains below Sandy Flat Gap in the southwestern section of the estate, which was similar in size to Flat Top, and Saw Mill Place Orchard, located east of Flat Top Orchard, that included nearly 3,800 trees on 25 acres, and was considerably smaller than the other two. The three estate orchards were all planted with a southerly orientation at an elevation below 4,000 feet to promote good fruit production. Although the Cones planted as many as seventy-five different apple cultivars, only sixteen of the cultivars were intended for commercial sale. The rest were for their personal consumption. In addition to apples, the Cones planted pears, peaches, plums, cherries, nectarines, chestnuts, and hickories, although little is known about the location of the nut tree groves. The orchards remained productive and continued to be maintained by Bertha Cone until circa 1940.<sup>18</sup> Diminished maintenance during the Depression led to the loss of many trees within China Orchard by 1940. At present, only Flat Top Orchard retains a sufficient number of historic trees in an open setting to recognize the structure of a former orchard.

To maintain the land in more open vegetative cover and perpetuate the axial view between the manor house and Bass Lake, the orchard now serves as pasture land. Beef cattle are allowed to graze there through lease agreements with local farmers and prevent this open land from being taken over by successional forest. To contain the cattle, the National Park Service has erected pasture fencing composed of peeled wood posts strung with strands of barbed wire. The pasture permits views of the manor house from the Entrance and Duncan roads.

#### ***Deer Park***

The former Deer Park lies to the north of the Flat Top Orchard along the Entrance Drive. This feature was one of two deer parks established by Moses Cone on the property during the early 1900s, but abandoned by the 1920s. Historically, Deer Park was a fenced pasture where a herd of deer were kept. Today, it is a wooded area that edges Flat Top Orchard. Associated with the Entrance Road in this area is light woodland that edges the former deer park but allows for views to the manor house from the vicinity of the apple barn. Stone walls support portions of the road, which includes a sharp hairpin turn near its intersection with Wadkins Road. One of the property's four kissing gates is located along the edge of the Entrance Road in this vicinity.

#### ***Stringfellow Road and the Apple Barn***

East of Bass Lake is Stringfellow Road, originally named by the Cones for a former property owner. A portion of Stringfellow Road is currently referred to as 'The Maze' by the National Park Service for the manner in which it turns and circles on itself several times. Stringfellow Road connects Bass Lake and the Entrance Roads, and intersects with Black Bottom Road. Near its intersection with Bass Lake Road, Stringfellow Road is conveyed across two small stream corridors via one wooden plank bridge and another steel and concrete bridge. The westernmost is constructed of steel beams and concrete abutments with wood or composite planking set at an angle, and square tubular metal guardrails composed of posts and a top and mid rail. These are anchored in the concrete of the bridge and the abutments. The bridge is 14 feet, 7 inches wide and 17 feet, 10 inches long. The bridge is set atop stacked stone retaining walls along the banks of the Bass Lake outflow. These bridges are likely replacements of Cone era wooden structures.

Beyond the bridges, the southern section of the road closely edges the estate's southern boundary. A late twentieth-century residential community stands to the south that is visible from portions of the Stringfellow Road corridor. After passing the southern estate boundary, the road turns northwestward, traversing a wooded area. The road margins were planted by Moses Cone with rows of white pine on the uphill side and sugar maple on the downhill side. The maze-like section is also edged by dense tree plantings and forest, which limits views beyond the road corridor.

North of The Maze, Stringfellow Road intersects Black Bottom Road. The apple barn (**one contributing building**), the only surviving historic agricultural building on the estate, is located at the intersection. The barn was sited southeast of the manor house in the former Saw Mill Place Orchard. It is L-shaped, with the main portion measuring 20 feet by 80 feet. The main portion

18. The Cones planted a fourth orchard on the south side of Blowing Rock at Green Park that is beyond the boundary of the property included as part of this nomination.



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

has a raised basement constructed of stucco-parged rubble stone masonry. The upper part is a wood-framed structure clad with painted wood Dutch-lap profile siding and a gable roof covered with sheet metal. Along the ridgeline of the main roof are three gabled ventilation cupolas. The east side of the main portion has one door opening and six vents near grade at the basement level, and two window openings with shutters and three low-height vents at the main level. The south end of the main portion has an arched door opening at the basement, one window opening with shutters at the main level, and a ventilation louver at the gable. The north end of the main portion has an arched door opening at the basement, one window opening with shutters and two low-height vents at the main level, and a ventilation louver at the gable. The barn is built into the hillside, and on the west side there is direct grade level access to the main level, which has two doors, one window opening with shutters, and seven low-height vents. All of the doors and window shutters are built of solid wood planks; at the west and east side doors only, the planks are oriented diagonally in each door.

The southwest ell addition to the original barn is a one-story wood-framed structure set on circular wood posts. The addition is clad with painted board-and-batten siding. The enclosed portion of the addition has a shed roof with exposed rafters and covered with sheet metal. Along the north side of the addition is a shed-roof porch with wood supports; the roof of the porch wraps onto a portion of the west facade of the original barn to shelter one of the entrance doors. The addition has one window at the west end, one window at the east end, and seven windows along the south side. The window openings are covered by spaced, vertical wood strips. The windows are six-light horizontal sliding sash. Along the north side of the addition under the porch are three pairs of doors.

The interior of the barn is utilitarian. At the basement level, the wood floor framing above is exposed, the walls are pargeted masonry, and the floor is wood plank. Wood posts along the centerline support the main level floor framing, and the space is divided by horizontal board partitions into smaller bays, formerly used for sorting and storing apples. The main level of the barn is divided into two unequal size rooms by a wood-framed partition wall with a painted seven-panel wood door. The walls and ceiling are sheathed by unpainted wood boards, except the south side of the partition wall, which is sheathed with Dutch-lap profile siding. Wood posts at the centerline of the building support the loft level framing. Three wooden ducts rise from the floor to the ceiling, extending up to the rooftop ventilation cupolas. In the north room, windows are eight-over-eight double hung units, while in the south room, windows are four-over-four double hung units. In the south room, a wood staircase with no railing ascends to the loft along the partition wall. At the southwest corner of this room is the hand-operated flat-bed elevator, formerly used to lift apples from the basement storage bins to the main level for packing. The gear mechanism for the elevator is located at the loft above. The interior of the addition is a single large room with exposed wood structural framing. The loft interior is an open space with wood plank flooring and exposed wood wall and roof construction. A trap door covers the opening to the staircase down to the main level.

The apple barn is set into a hillside with an entrance at the lower level along Stringfellow Road and an additional entrance on the upper level behind that is accessed from a spur road that connects Stringfellow and Black Bottom roads. Stacked native stone has been used to create a ramped retaining wall near the front of the building. An additional wall extends around the side of the building where the roads intersect.

Stringfellow Road continues west from the apple barn, ending in a T intersection at the Entrance Road. The northern end of the carriage drive affords views of the conifer plantations established by the Cones during the early twentieth century.

### ***Black Bottom Road***

Black Bottom Road links the Entrance, Wadkins, and Stringfellow roads in the southeastern quadrant of the district near the apple barn. Black Bottom Road is a former farm road and does not feature tree plantings, special views, or connections to key landscape features. A wood plank bridge provides access across Flat Top Branch, and there are several culverts associated with the road that convey stormwater beneath the road from the uphill to the downhill side. Young woodlands and pine plantations edge the road for much of its length suggesting that orchards and pasture formerly characterized the landscape in this part of the estate. A wooden bridge conveys Black Bottom Road across Flat Top Branch near its intersection with Wadkins Road.

### ***Wadkins Road***

Black Bottom Road continues east through a wooded area and crosses Flat Top Branch before ending at Wadkins Road. This carriage drive, named by Moses Cone for a previous property owner, extends east and south from the Entrance Road, crossing Flat Top Branch, and continuing through the southeastern section of the property to a gate along the southeastern boundary. Wadkins Road served as one of the five entrances into the property, and was primarily used for agricultural activities. Much of the road corridor is wooded and the terrain is steeply sloped. The road winds through the undulating landform and includes several twisting sections, with few views afforded beyond the surrounding forest vegetation. The section east of the switchbacks is

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

pastoral in character and includes alternating views of young woodland and pastures. The pastures, which afford long views up the hillside from the carriage drive, are used to graze livestock and for hay. They are contained by post and wire fencing. A wooden cattle chute and holding pens established during National Park Service ownership of the property facilitates transportation of cattle to the pastures. As it approaches the eastern boundary of the property, Wadkins Road passes through a cove forest and fords Penley Branch. The Blowing Rock Reservoir is located on land adjacent to the Flat Top Estate along the southeastern boundary. The 20-acre site of the reservoir was originally part of the estate, but later transferred to the Town of Blowing Rock to support water supply needs. The parcel contains an 11-acre pond created in 1955, that was enlarged to its current size in 1977. The dam and pond have been operated and maintained by the Town of Blowing Rock since its creation. The property transfer was completed in 2012.

Part of the historic Old Camp Catawba Road still connects U.S. Highway 321 with Wadkins Road, although portions of the road corridor have been abandoned.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

## FLAT TOP ESTATE HISTORIC DISTRICT DATA SHEET

### Contributing Resources

RESOURCE NAME	LCS ID	ASMIS No.	PARK UNIT	DATE	PHOTO No.
<b>BUILDINGS – 4</b>					
Flat Top Manor	none	BLRI00012.001	BLRI	1899–1900	4–12
Carriage House	none	BLRI00012.003	BLRI	1899–1905	13–14
Apple Barn	none	BLRI00012.004	BLRI	Circa 1905	32–33
Sandy Flat Missionary Baptist Church	none	BLRI00051.000	BLRI	1908	23
<b>SITES – 2</b>					
Designed Historic Landscape	none	none	BLRI	Circa 1899-1947	
<i>Associated Historical Features</i>					
Carriage drive system	none	none		1899-1905	
Entrance Road corridor, including asphalt-paved road, wrought-iron gates and stone piers, stone entrance wall, rows of sugar maple trees, six stacked stone retaining walls, stone culverts, views to the Manor House, and Esplanade balustrade					1–4, 30
Bass Lake Road corridor, including gravel road, rows of sugar maples, ornamental shrub plantings, four stone bridges					26–27
Flat Top Road corridor, including earth and gravel road, nine stacked stone retaining wall, stone culverts, ornamental shrub plantings, views of Flat Top Meadow and Blue Ridge Mountains					
Rich Mountain Road corridor, including earth road, thirteen stacked stone retaining walls, white ash and sugar maple tree plantings, ornamental shrub plantings, views of mountains, pasture					
Trout Lake Road corridor, including earth road, ornamental shrub plantings, stone culverts, bridges					
May View Road corridor, including earth road, white ash tree plantings, stacked stone retaining wall, views of the Blue Ridge Mountains					
Duncan Road corridor, including earth and gravel road, rows of sugar maple tulip poplar trees, ornamental shrub plantings, three stacked stone retaining walls, stone culverts, views of Flat Top Manor					24
Stringfellow Road corridor, including earth and gravel road, bridges, stone culverts, rows of white pine and sugar maple trees					31
Black Bottom Road corridor, including earth road, stacked stone retaining walls					
Wadkins Road corridor, including earth road, views of pasture					
Bass Lake, including dam and stone spillway					25
Trout Lake, including dam and stone spillway					
Upper Pond, including dam and retaining wall					
Heart-shaped pools, view to Manor House					28–29
Cascade pool					20
Rich Mountain viewing platform					21
Terraced gardens near the Carriage House, including stone walls, planting beds, arbor	091321				

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

	Figure Eight Walk					
	Flat Top Orchard, including mature apple trees					
	Flat Top Meadow					18-19
	Rich Mountain Pasture					
	Flat Top Pasture					
	Wadkins Road Pasture					
	Evergreen plantations and hedges					
	Hydrangea plantings					
	Boat house ruins					
	Stacked stone retaining walls, Manor House, Apple Barn, Carriage House					
	Cone Cemetery		none	BLRI	Circa 1908-1947	16-17
	<i>Associated Historical Features</i>					
	monument	091322				
	grave markers					
	Wrought iron fence					
	Designed landscape, which features evergreen tree plantings and views to Blue Ridge Mountains					
<b>TOTAL CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES = 6</b>						

#### Non-Contributing Resources

RESOURCE NAME	LCS ID	ASMIS #	PARK UNIT	DATE	PHOTO No.
<b>BUILDINGS – 5</b>					
Servant's house (lost integrity)	none	none	BLRI	Circa 1900	
Ranger House 1	none	none	BLRI	Circa 1958	
Ranger House 2	none	none	BLRI	Circa 1958	
Ranger Station office building	none	none	BLRI	1980	
Historic Preservation Workshop, ranger station area	none	none	BLRI	1994	
<b>STRUCTURES – 12</b>					
Blue Ridge Parkway (as it passes through Flat Top Estate)	none	none	BLRI	1955-1960	
<i>Associated Historical Features</i>					
parking area behind Flat Top Manor	none		BLRI		

Flat Top Estate

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

Name of Property

	Moses Cone Overlook (MP293.5)	225030		BLRI		
	Bridge Over Shulls Mill Road at Mile Post 294.62	403934		BLRI		
	Culverts	331569		BLRI		
	gunboard signs	092227		BLRI		
	mile markers	092225		BLRI		
Flat Top Mountain observation tower	none	none		BLRI	1954	19
US Highway 221 Rest Area restroom	none	none		BLRI	1955	
U.S. Highway 221 overpass at May View Road	none	none		BLRI	Circa 1960s	
Servant's house carport	none	none		BLRI	Circa 1980s	
Utility building, U.S. Highway 221 Rest Area	none	none		BLRI	1980s	
Vehicle storage building, ranger station area	none	none		BLRI	1981	
Pole shed, ranger station area	none	none		BLRI	1998	
Insecticide storage building, ranger station area	none	none		BLRI	2002	
Bass Lake comfort station	none	none		BLRI	2009	
Pump house, Servant's house	none	none		BLRI	Unknown	
Pump house, Flat Top Pasture	none	none		BLRI	Unknown	
<b>TOTAL NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES = 17</b>						



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☒ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Industry

Landscape Architecture

Social History

### Period of Significance

1899–1947

### Significant Dates

1899–1900: Construction of Flat Top Manor

1908: Death of Moses Cone

1911: Property deeded by Bertha Cone to the Moses H.

Cone Memorial Hospital as "Moses H. Cone Memorial  
Park"

1947: Death of Bertha Cone

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cone, Moses Herman (1857–1908)

### Cultural Affiliation

### Architect/Builder

Epps, Orlo (1884–1926)

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

### Period of Significance (justification)

Consideration of the historic events and associations of Flat Top Estate Historic District suggests an overall period of significance of 1899–1947. This period of significance encompasses the years of development of the property by Moses Cone, from 1899 until his death in 1908, and the period in which his wife, Bertha, maintained and operated the property, until her death in 1947. The death of Bertha Cone ended the direct connection of the Cones with the estate that they had established and also reflects the end of the property's function as a private country estate and agricultural enterprise.

Starting in 1892 and during the first decades of the period of significance, Moses Cone acquired multiple tracts of land totaling approximately 3,500 acres just north of the resort town of Blowing Rock in Watauga County, North Carolina. Beginning in the late 1890s and continuing until his death in 1908, Cone developed the property into a country estate that included the design and construction of 25 miles of carriage roads, the establishment of three apple orchards, the organization of two deer parks, and the construction of Flat Top Manor house as well as gardens, lakes, and ponds. The Flat Top Manor house was constructed from 1899 to 1900. Moses Cone's death in 1908 concluded the period of extensive estate development.

After Moses Cone's death in 1908, his wife Bertha assumed ownership of the estate. During her stewardship of Flat Top Estate, Bertha Cone sought to preserve Moses' legacy by overseeing the estate in a manner similar to that established by her husband. Bertha Cone was responsible for expanding farming operations including the creation of a dairy at Flat Top estate. To ensure the perpetual maintenance of the estate and its opening to the public after her death, Bertha Cone deeded the property to the Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital in 1911, giving it the name "Moses H. Cone Memorial Park." She retained the right to live at and manage the estate for the remainder of her life.

### Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

### Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The historic district comprised of Flat Top Estate, now Moses H. Cone Memorial Park, is significant at the state level under National Register Criterion A as an example of a Country Place era estate. At Flat Top, Moses Cone established a gentleman's country retreat in the style of those established by American captains of industry of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The historic district is one of the largest and best preserved country estates in western North Carolina, incorporating a large manor house surrounded by orchards, pastures, meadows, lakes and other constructed water features, roads, and forests.

The historic district is also significant at a state level under National Register Criterion B in the area of industry for its historic association with Moses Cone, who revolutionized textile manufacturing in the South, and particularly in North Carolina, during the late nineteenth century. In partnership with his brother Ceasar, Moses Cone reorganized the marketing of textiles by southern textile mills and introduced the manufacture of denim in the South. The entrepreneurial efforts of Moses Cone during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries throughout the southeast region affected this industry throughout the country.

The historic district is nationally significant under National Register Criterion C in the area of landscape architecture for the planning of the estate, in particular the extensive network of carriage roads and associated plantings designed by Moses Cone. The carriage roads are among very few such systems in private estates of this period in this country; represent extensive and careful design and planning; and remain nearly intact today. The historic district also includes the Colonial Revival style manor house, significant at the state level in the area of Architecture.<sup>19</sup>

19. The evaluation of significance for the Moses H. Cone Memorial Park included review of the Cultural Landscape Report for the property prepared by Ian Firth (1993); the Historic Resource Study prepared by Barry M. Buxton (1987), which included a brief draft National Register narrative (undated, no author given) as an appendix to the HRS report; and the Moses H. Cone Manor House Historic Structure Report prepared by Surber and Barber Architects, Inc. (1996). Also reviewed was a draft National Register nomination developed by Laura Phillips (2010), together with comments provided by NPS SERO in response to that draft nomination. The findings of the above studies were considered in conjunction with the guidance afforded in several National Register bulletins, including *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation* (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior, 1995); and Linda Flint McClelland, National Park Service, and J. Timothy Keller, Genevieve P. Keller, and Robert Z. Melnick, Land and Community Associates, *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Rural Historic Districts* (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1989; revised 1999).

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

The association of the Flat Top Estate Historic District with the Blue Ridge Parkway, and its role as a recreational area along the parkway, are not considered as part of this nomination.<sup>20</sup>

The structures of Flat Top Estate are closely related to the surrounding environment. Archeological remains, such as trash pits, privies, wells, and other structural remains which may be present, can provide information valuable to the understanding and interpretation of the contributing structures. Information concerning land-use patterns, agricultural practices, social standing and social mobility, as well as structural details, is often only evident in the archeological record. Therefore, archeological remains may well be an important component of the significance of the structures. At this time very limited investigation has been done to discover these remains, but it is likely that they exist, and this should be considered in any development of the property.

---

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

***Criterion A: Social History***

Under Criterion A, the Flat Top Estate Historic District is significant in the area of Social History as an example of a gentleman's country estate established by an American captain of industry of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. By the time of his death, Moses Cone was a model country gentleman whose life at Flat Top Estate illustrated the ideals of the Country Place era.<sup>21</sup> Now known as the Moses H. Cone Memorial Park, the historic district represents one of the largest and best preserved country estates in western North Carolina.

The construction of Flat Top Estate occurred during what is commonly referred to as the Country Place era. Beginning with the period of rapid industrialization that followed the Civil War in the 1880s and continuing until the economic downfall of the late 1920s, wealthy business leaders established private estates in picturesque rural settings.<sup>22</sup> As exemplified in Flat Top Estate, a Country Place era estate often consisted of a large main house surrounded by a landscape consisting of both formal gardens and natural landscapes, including orchards, pastures, meadows, lakes, landscape roads, and forests.

As Firth notes:

Country places provided a respite from the pressures of the city to which one could return physically rejuvenated and morally uplifted. This was an idea deeply embedded in western culture from the time of Virgil and the design of a typical American country place made clear references to its European antecedents. . . . Someone purchasing a country place was expected to adopt the style and habits of a gentleman. . . . Rural undertakings might involve laying out the grounds or any branch of agriculture. The design of the estate would establish the gentleman's reputation as a man of refined tastes, while the management of the land would allow him to set an example of progressive thinking and business acumen to the rural community. At the same time his wealth enabled him to set aside from agriculture a portion of his estate, and thereby to subscribe to the ideals of the new conservation movement.<sup>23</sup>

The Country Place era had its roots in colonial times, when farmers were admired for their stable and productive lifeways and figures such as Thomas Jefferson promoted agricultural life as the model for citizens of the fledgling United States. During the late nineteenth century, country life was idealized as both healthy and virtuous, while city life was viewed as unhealthy and morally corrupt. It was believed that living in a country setting, in an appropriately structured environment, promoted good health and provided an atmosphere conducive to emotional and spiritual well-being.<sup>24</sup> While the homes of the Country Place era were usually located away from large cities, they were in many cases readily accessible from the cities by modern transportation such as trolleys, trams, or private vehicles.

While the wealthy constructed rural estates to enjoy the benefits of country life and nature, their properties also served as status symbols and a way to display one's wealth. Leaders of business and industry across the country developed private estates in landscaped parks throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. J. Ogden Armour, president of the Armour meat-

---

20. The pending National Historical Landmark Nomination currently in development for the Blue Ridge Parkway will address the significance of Flat Top Estate in relation to the Blue Ridge Parkway.

21. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 84.

22. *Ibid.*, 82-83.

23. *Ibid.*, 82.

24. Philip T. Noblitt, *A Mansion in the Mountains: The Story of Moses and Bertha Cone and Their Blowing Rock Manor*. (Boone, North Carolina: Parkway Publishers, Inc., 1996), 28, citing Peter J. Schmitt, *Back to Nature: The Arcadian Myth in Urban America* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), xvii, and George B. Tatum, "The Emergence of an American School of Landscape Design," *Historic Preservation* (April-June 1973), 38, 41.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

packing company, developed the 1,000-acre Melody Farm north of Chicago in 1908, while businessman Hugh McKennan Landon constructed the French chateaux inspired Oldfields outside of Indianapolis in 1909–1913. The Renaissance Revival house at Melody Farm sat among formal gardens designed by landscape architect Ossian Simonds. William Randolph Hearst commissioned architect Julia Morgan to design an eclectic Spanish Revival estate near San Simeon, California. Hearst Castle sat in a 127-acre landscape with formal gardens, swimming pools, tennis courts, and a private zoo.

R. J. Reynolds, founder of the R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, constructed Reynolda outside of Winston-Salem in 1917. Reynolda was a 1,000 acre estate that included a model farm. The main house at Reynolda was designed by Philadelphia architect Charles Barton Keen as a large bungalow in the Colonial Revival style. The two-and-one-half-story home featured long, symmetrical facades with multi-light windows and pedimented dormers, and was clad with stucco with a gabled green tile roof. Expansive glazed French doors at the first floor of the house overlooked a formal garden, while the interior featured a grand two-story drawing room. Similar to the Cone's orchards at Flat Top, Reynolds's wife Katherine established a model farm where local farmers could learn about the benefits of soil analysis and crop rotation, as well as other new progressive methods of farming not regularly practiced in the region. In addition to the model farm, Reynolda housed a dairy that provided milk to the estate as well as to surrounding communities.<sup>25</sup> A series of formal gardens and a 16-acre lake were constructed near the main house.

Biltmore, constructed by George Vanderbilt III, near Asheville, North Carolina, is perhaps the best-known example of a Country Place era estate, although on a scale well beyond that of many of the other examples noted here.<sup>26</sup> Biltmore was completed in 1895 after nearly six years of construction. The 250-room house, designed by architect Richard Morris Hunt, was modeled after sixteenth-century French chateaux. The grounds of the 125,000 acre estate were designed by Frederick Law Olmsted. In addition to designing several gardens and parks, Olmsted sought to reclaim over-farmed land by establishing the first managed forest in the United States. The forests at Biltmore, overseen by noted forester Gifford Pinchot, became a model of progressive forestry. Formal gardens defined the landscape near the house, while a deer park and bass pond could also be found on the 125,000 acre estate.<sup>27</sup>

Thomas Carnegie, brother of Andrew Carnegie, and his wife, Lucy Coleman Carnegie, began construction on an estate on Cumberland Island off the coast of Georgia in 1884. After a visit to the island, Lucy Carnegie had determined to buy the Dungeness estate, which housed the ruins of an early nineteenth-century mansion, for a winter home. The house that Thomas Carnegie constructed was a two-story structure, designed in the Queen Anne and Stick styles, with granite walls, a Vermont slate roof, and a 90-foot-tall tower at one end. When Thomas Carnegie died at the age of forty-three in 1886, his wife sold their home in Pittsburgh and moved with her nine children to the island, returning to the North during the summers. Lucy Carnegie engaged the architectural firm of Peabody and Stearns of Boston to enlarge the house; the mansion was eventually completed as a massive Italianate structure with fifty-nine rooms. Thomas Carnegie also built drives through the forests, worked to revitalize the existing orchards, and added exotic plantings. After his death, Lucy Carnegie constructed numerous additional buildings, walls, a pergola, greenhouses, and a Queen Anne-style guesthouse with a pool and squash court. She converted one of the ornamental gardens to a vegetable and fruit garden. The estate, which comprised nearly 90 percent of the 36,000-acre island, raised poultry, cows, beef cattle, and pigs, as well as assorted crops and sea island cotton; boats traveled to the mainland each day to bring provisions for the Carnegies and their guests.<sup>28</sup>

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., first visited Mount Desert Island, now part of Acadia National Park, as a student in 1893. Fifteen years later he returned with his family, living first in Bar Harbor during the summers. Rockefeller enjoyed the respite from his life in New York on Mount Desert Island, and supported the ban against automobiles on the island that was established in 1908. In 1910, Rockefeller left his position at Standard Oil Company to devote his life to philanthropy. He moved with his family to Seal Harbor on Mount Desert Island, and gradually expanded a Tudor-style cottage, the "Eyrie," into a hundred-room mansion. Seeking to support and protect the peaceful character of Mount Desert Island, Rockefeller funded the construction of 45 miles of rustic carriage roads, open to horse and carriages, and equestrian and pedestrian use, but not accessible to motorized vehicles. The construction project, which continued from 1913 to 1940, resulted in a network of state-of-the-art broken-stone roads, 16 feet wide, with grades and curves designed to accommodate horse-drawn carriages. Rockefeller aligned the roads to follow natural

25. [www.reynoldahouse.org/discover/reynolda/historic.php](http://www.reynoldahouse.org/discover/reynolda/historic.php), accessed February 2011.

26. Noblitt, 28–29, citing Susan M. Ward and Michael K. Smith, *Biltmore Estate* (Asheville, North Carolina: Biltmore Company, 1989), 5. George W. Vanderbilt III eventually spent \$3 million on Biltmore, which upon completion was the largest private residence in the world.

27. Davyd Foard Hood, Isinglass; Daniel Vivian, National Park Service, National Historic Landmarks Survey, ed. *Biltmore Estate National Historic Landmark Nomination (Additional Documentation and Boundary Reduction)*, additional documentation approved April 5, 2005.

28. Lary M. Dilsaver, *Cumberland Island National Seashore: A History of Conservation Conflict* (Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 2004). Accessed online at [http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online\\_books/cuis/dilsaver/chap2.pdf](http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/cuis/dilsaver/chap2.pdf), August 2012.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

contours and provide scenic views, and had the roadsides landscaped with native materials to help blend the roads with the landscape.<sup>29</sup> The carriage roads constituted a unique and lasting contribution to the natural setting.

Like many other wealthy industrialists and businessmen of the period, Moses Cone sought to provide himself and his family with a retreat from their busy city life. As the Cone textile empire grew and the brothers became wealthy entrepreneurs, Moses Cone decided to purchase land in western North Carolina for the purpose of developing a country estate. Together with many others who built such country estates, Cone believed that country life promoted health as well as emotional and spiritual uplift. However, such country places also provided a way for their owners to display their wealth through architecture and landscape design. For Moses Cone in particular, Flat Top Estate was more than a country retreat and a display of wealth; it was also the setting in which he could experiment with scientific agriculture through his orchards and other farm activities. Flat Top, though more modest in scale than an estate such as Biltmore, contained many of the characteristic features of a Country Place era estate including orchards, pastures, meadows, lakes, landscape roads, and forests. Moses Cone was aware of Biltmore's construction and began to purchase land near Blowing Rock two years after George Vanderbilt began work at Biltmore. Although there is no evidence that Moses Cone knew Vanderbilt or corresponded with him about building an estate, Flat Top Estate was clearly inspired by Biltmore. Like Biltmore, Flat Top contained carriage roads, a bass lake and boathouse, deer parks, and cattle, sheep, chickens, and gardens; both owners were interested in scientific agriculture, and Flat Top Estate's attention to apple orchards resembled Biltmore's progressive forestry.<sup>30</sup>

Cone selected a property near Blowing Rock in Watauga County. Blowing Rock, at 4,000 feet elevation, featured beautiful mountain scenery and was attractively cool in the summers; Cone selected the site in part for the "salubrious and invigorating effect of the climate."<sup>31</sup> The first summer home was built in the area in 1856 by James Harper, a merchant from Lenoir. Between 1884 and 1891, the Watauga, Blowing Rock, and Green Park hotels opened in Blowing Rock. By the time Moses Cone decided to purchase property in the area, the community was an established resort destination, with a year-round population of 200 expanding to more than 600 during the summer months.<sup>32</sup> The town offered telegraph and telephone service and delivery of newspapers from around the state. Despite Blowing Rock's isolated location in the mountains, a turnpike allowed for stage and surrey transportation to Lenoir, where train service was available to Greensboro and other locations, from which connections could be made to New York and other major cities.<sup>33</sup>

Blowing Rock was a natural choice for Moses Cone, who had grown up in Jonesboro and felt at home in western North Carolina. The facilities of Blowing Rock allowed him to continue to direct his business while vacationing in the mountains. In addition, land costs were reasonable as compared to urban markets. During the summer months, Blowing Rock attracted bankers and industrialists from around the South, creating a social environment that would have appealed to Cone.<sup>34</sup>

Moses Cone purchased his first property in the area, 31 acres near Blowing Rock, in September 1892.<sup>35</sup> A year later, he purchased 940 acres on Rich Mountain. In all, Cone purchased more than 3,516 acres through forty-five separate transactions. Cone's property was larger than similar estates closer to New York or Baltimore, though nowhere near as large as Biltmore or the Carnegie property on Cumberland Island, Georgia.

The property that Cone assembled was a patchwork of former agricultural fields, pastures, woodlots, and forests. Much of the land consisted of steep, stony soils. Erosion and decades of farming had led to a depletion of productivity of the soils by the time Moses Cone acquired his property. However, numerous streams and springs were also present, and Cone realized the potential of the sites. In 1895, Cone had 10 acres of forest cut, and stumps and dead trees removed from another 200 acres of his land at his property. By early 1898, nearly 21,000 apple trees had been planted on the cleared land. By the fall of 1899, 4,000 more apple trees were planted, in addition to 2,000 peach, pear, plum, and cherry trees.<sup>36</sup>

With work on his orchards underway, Cone began to plan construction of a home on the site, as well as outbuildings including a carriage house and stable, a laundry house incorporating an ice house and gaslight plant, two servants' houses, and a bowling

29. Acadia National Park, accessed at <http://www.nps.gov/acad/historyculture/historiccarriageroads.htm>, August 2012.

30. Noblitt, 31.

31. Indenture, May 30, 1911, cited in Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 83.

32. Noblitt, 32–33, citing Barry M. Buxton, *A Village Tapestry, The History of Blowing Rock* (Boone, North Carolina: Appalachian Consortium Press, 1898), 2, 18–19, 90; John Preston Arthur, *A History of Watauga County, North Carolina* (Richmond: Everett Waddey, 1915), 217–218.

33. Ibid., 31–33.

34. Surber and Barber Architects, Inc., *Moses H. Cone Manor House: Historic Structure Report*, prepared for the Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, February 1996, 11; Noblitt, 33–34.

35. Noblitt, 33, citing Caldwell County Deed Book 24, 511, and the Watauga County Deed Book R, 131.

36. Ibid., 36, citing *Watauga Democrat*, September 23, 1897; *Greensboro Patriot*, December 29, 1897, February 2, 1898, and September 13, 1899.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

alley. In addition to these structures and various farm buildings, Cone began erecting small frame houses in 1897 for workers and their families.

Flat Top Estate and its manor house served not only as the focus of Cone's social life during his last years and the center of activities for both Moses and Bertha Cone on the estate, but also as the setting for visits from their many distinguished and prominent friends. Moses and Bertha Cone spent summers at Flat Top Estate, returning to their homes in New York and Baltimore each fall. During the summers they entertained family, friends, and influential guests such as the governor of North Carolina and the president of the Southern Railroad Company at Flat Top Estate. Moses Cone's sisters, Etta Cone and Dr. Claribel Cone, renowned collectors of modern art, also spent many summers at the estate.

In the early decades of its history, the estate was important as a place of private recreation in which the Cones and their guests could enjoy the relaxing mountain environment. Moses Cone developed the carriage drives, constructed lakes, and orchestrated views and landscape spaces framed with ornamental plantings to provide a pastoral setting for his family's activities. The lakes and ponds were stocked with fish for the family's use. These recreational pursuits are consistent with national trends in estate development at the end of the nineteenth century by individuals deriving wealth from industrialization.

The primary agricultural features of the estate, the apple orchards, represent an important part of America's horticultural heritage. Although only a small amount of commerce involving apples was possible in the United States until the mid-nineteenth century because of a lack of transportation systems suitable for conveying the fruit to market, apples were a popular crop. Each farm had its own orchard, typically consisting of seedling trees as well as grafted nursery trees. Common apples from seedling trees were used to feed stock and for cider making, while the apples from a wide variety of grafted trees provided crops throughout the year. Increasing interest in pomiculture led to a wide variety of apples being grown in this country. By mid-century, Andrew Downing and his brother Charles had identified more than 1,800 varieties of apples, of which 1,099 were American in origin.<sup>37</sup>

The opening of canals and extension of railroads in the latter half of the nineteenth century stimulated the development of commerce in apples. Among the primary challenges to the commercial development of apple orchards were losses through disease and pests. Insecticides were first introduced in New York State in the 1870s and fungicidal sprays in 1885, leading to increased success among commercial growers.<sup>38</sup> However, an outcome of this commercial success was that growers gradually concentrated on a few varieties of apples, rather than continuing to propagate the wide variety of older types previously found in individual farm orchards.

The Cone orchards were established in the early days of commercial apple growing in the United States. The Cones incorporated a seemingly large number of apple varieties into their plantings, rendering the orchards a microcosm of what was available at the time. Flat Top Estate included two types of orchards: commercial sections, in which the Cones grew sixteen cultivars selected for marketability and adaptation to the region, and family orchards, which featured fifty-nine varieties of apples. Some of these varieties may have only been cultivated locally but each was valued for its particular qualities. Of the seventy-five types of apples grown on the estate, many are no longer commercially available and some may be considered rare. The orchard maps developed by Freeman Mulford during his tenure on the Cone estate provide an invaluable resource in understanding the planning and development of the unique remnant orchards. In the 1993 *Cultural Landscape Report*, Ian Firth noted that the orchards "... are potentially important as a collection of old apple varieties; some of which are now rare. The combination of commercial with family orchards makes them representative of a turning point in the composition of American orchards."<sup>39</sup> The Cone orchards are important to understanding the history of fruit-growing in the United States as well as to the germplasm of old apple varieties grown in the region.

When Moses Cone began planting apple trees in 1898, pomologists considered the soil and climate in western North Carolina among the best in the United States for growing choice winter apples. Orchards were prevalent in North Carolina at the beginning of the twentieth century, as the state's 4.2 million trees produced more than 7 million bushels of apples annually.<sup>40</sup> The Cone estate had a particularly well suited climate for growing apples. The Flat Top, China, and Saw Mill Place Orchards were all

37. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 87, citing Bailey, 1892, 230. Firth notes that in 1845, Andrew Jackson Downing attempted to compile first comprehensive list of apples in cultivation in America; *The Fruits and Fruit Trees of America* was revised 1869 by his brother Charles.

38. Ibid., citing Beach, 1905, 41.

39. Ibid., 92.

40. Noblitt, 36-37, citing North Carolina Board of Agriculture, *Apple Bulletin* (July 1900), 18, 4-5.



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

located below an elevation of 4,000 feet and possessed a southerly orientation. Despite the steep slopes and shallow, stony soil at the three orchard sites, the varieties of apple trees planted were successful in these locations.<sup>41</sup>

By the fall of 1899, the number of apple trees at Flat Top Estate totaled 25,100.<sup>42</sup> The fruit trees at Flat Top were mostly contained in three main orchards. The largest orchard, Flat Top Orchard, occupied 82 acres along the slopes of the valley below the manor house. The 81-acre China Orchard sat below Sandy Flat, along the scarp face of the Blue Ridge. Adjacent to Flat Top Orchard and approximately one-third of its size was Saw Mill Place Orchard. A fourth orchard owned by Moses Cone was located nearly 3 miles away from Flat Top Estate, next to the Green Park Hotel. In addition to the four orchards, fruit trees were also planted near the estate employees' homes.<sup>43</sup>

Although his new orchards would prove to be successful financially, Moses Cone apparently began planting fruit trees because of his personal interest in scientific farming, rather than as an investment. Cone was particularly interested in demonstrating the value of scientific pomology.<sup>44</sup> Scientific practices, including research on the development, cultivation and physiological studies of fruit, were beginning to play an important role in the production of commercial produce at the time Moses Cone began planting the orchards at Flat Top. Cone sought an individual with proper training who could be charged with managing the orchards, which were to show what could be realized with scientifically practiced agriculture. In late 1899, Cone hired 31-year-old Freeman Mulford of New Jersey to manage his orchards.<sup>45</sup> Mulford later worked at the United States Department of Agriculture as a horticulturist specializing in the nomenclature of annual plants.<sup>46</sup> During the next year, Mulford inventoried and mapped the orchards at Flat Top as well as the orchard at Green Park. In keeping with his desire to demonstrate the value of scientific pomology, Cone had seventy-five varieties of apples planted, many of which were considered rare. Cultivars best suited for the slope of the orchards were chosen. Sixteen varieties were sold commercially, while the rest were for the use of the Cone family and estate. In addition to apples, Mulford's inventory also indicated that pears, peaches, plums, cherries, nectarines, chestnuts, and hickory nuts were being grown at the Cone orchards.<sup>47</sup>

The trees in the orchards were planted approximately 35 feet apart, interspersing rows of permanent trees with filler trees. (The filler trees protected the permanent trees for the first several years of growth, until they reached their full production potential, at which time the filler trees were removed). The trees were typically pruned from February to May, while pesticides and fungicides were applied to the trees throughout the growing season. After the apples were harvested, they were taken to apple barns where they were sorted and packaged. Apples that were not being sold immediately were stored in large barrels of cool water insulated with wood shavings.<sup>48</sup>

Cone gradually extended his apple orchards over the next decade.<sup>49</sup> By the early 1900s, the orchards employed more than 15 percent of the population of Blowing Rock; the more than 10,000 trees produced over 50,000 bushels of apples that were shipped throughout the Southeast and elsewhere, as well as used on the estate.<sup>50</sup> The extensive local employment provided by the orchards provided an alternate to subsistence farming and improved the economy of the community.

In scientific agriculture, as with landscape architecture, Moses Cone was largely self-taught. Cone subscribed to several farm magazines including *Progressive Farmer*, read technical reports, and subscribed to societies and organizations that shared the information he sought for application at his estate; for example, he was a member of the American Hereford Cattle Breeders' Association.<sup>51</sup> In addition to practicing the model scientific methods of orchard management, Moses Cone also sought to demonstrate best practices in stock farming. In the fall of 1899, Cone had 400 acres on the slopes of Flat Top and Rich mountains turned into land for grazing. By early 1900, he had purchased ninety-nine cattle, as well as Shropshire sheep, horses, oxen, and turkeys. Cone also constructed a henry near the carriage house to house Brown Leghorns. In 1902, the *Greensboro Patriot*

41. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 39.

42. Noblitt, 36, citing *Watauga Democrat*, September 23, 1897; *Greensboro Patriot*, December 29, 1897, February 2, 1898, and September 13, 1899.

43. Firth, 38.

44. Noblitt, 36–37.

45. Ibid., 47, citing *Greensboro Patriot*, September 13, 1899; U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Schedules*, Watauga County, 1900; Firth, 14.

46. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 27. Firth notes that Mulford's diary suggests a wide knowledge of horticulture, and that seventeen years later Olmsted, Colville, and Kelsey cited Mulford as an authority within the U.S. Department of Agriculture on the nomenclature of annual plants.

47. Ibid., 40.

48. Noblitt, 53, citing James Beeler and others, "An Analysis of the China Orchard in the Moses H. Cone Estate, 1900–1947 (Student paper, Appalachian State university, 1980), 94–95.

49. Ibid., 36, citing North Carolina Board of Agriculture, *Apple Bulletin* (July 1900), 18, 4–5.

50. Buxton, *Historic Resource Study, Appendix – Draft National Register nomination*, undated.

51. Noblitt, 54, citing *Greensboro Patriot*, June 18, 1902.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

reported that Cone was developing some of the finest cattle in the state.<sup>52</sup> However, despite his success in raising livestock, Cone eventually scaled back cattle breeding as he did not find it profitable.<sup>53</sup>

Moses and Bertha Cone were avid conservationists with regard to the natural resources of their estate. Reportedly influenced by Gifford Pinchot, they planted a wide variety of trees and wildflowers (including native as well as non-native species), constructed lakes, and created deer parks to protect the deer population. Moses Cone considered the placement of and interrelationships between the gardens, orchards, fields, ponds, pastures, and other developed resources of their property, as well as the relationship between the estate and the surrounding environment.

The labor system created at the estate was similar to that used at the Cone's Greensboro mills, where talking to a union representative, excessive drinking, or poor moral character were grounds for dismissal. Estate workers were paid 7-1/2 cents per hour. In return for their work, they were allowed to live rent-free on the estate and received pasturage for one cow and a half-acre garden plot.<sup>54</sup> The Cones provided sufficient work during the winter months so that tenants received regular wages year round; in turn, the tenants paid for farm products they used such as apples, hay, and firewood.<sup>55</sup>

Moses Cone and the Cone family became known not only for their business acumen but for their philanthropy. They were interested in the health and education of their employees, and provided welfare service as well as company schools.<sup>56</sup> The Cones took a paternalistic view of their works, expecting deference and a willingness to follow the rules of the estate. Some families remained with the estate for decades, with children born at Flat Top spending their adult lives there as well.<sup>57</sup> At Flat Top estate the Cones provided funds for establishment of Sandy Flat School and required that all children on the estate attend school. Bertha Cone, as well as Moses Cone's sister Etta, taught at Sandy Flat School. Moses Cone served on the Watauga County Board of Education and was on the original Board of Governors with his wife Bertha of Appalachian Training School, later Appalachian State University.<sup>58</sup>

Moses Cone, whose health had begun to deteriorate in his last years, died in Baltimore on December 8, 1908, from myocarditis, pulmonary edema, arteriosclerosis, chronic nephritis, and high blood pressure. Cone's body was escorted by family members from Baltimore to Greensboro on a Southern Railway train. Additional family members, friends, employees, and government officials joined the funeral party, which continued to Blowing Rock in coaches and wagons. Moses Cone was laid to rest at a site halfway up Flat Top Mountain. A granite monument with an inscribed bronze plaque marked the grave.<sup>59</sup>

Moses Cone left no will and upon his death, his heirs, who included his wife Bertha and his brothers and sisters, were required to settle his estate. Cone's estate, which included Flat Top Estate, his textile holdings, and life insurance policies, was valued at nearly \$500,000, a significant sum at the time. Due to the size and complexity of the estate, it took Bertha Cone and Caesar Cone, the court-appointed administrators of the estate, two-and-one-half years to negotiate a settlement that was acceptable to all parties. The final agreement, which was signed in May 1911, gave Bertha control of Flat Top Estate and Moses Cone's other personal property, while her stock in the Cone Export and Commission Company was conveyed to the Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital, a proposed facility the Cones sought to build in honor of Moses. Although Bertha Cone would continue to receive income from the stock during her lifetime, these assets would be donated to the hospital upon her death along with the entire estate at Blowing Rock, which would be converted to a park. By terms of the settlement, Bertha Cone was excluded from management of the Cone Export and Commission Company.<sup>60</sup>

Shortly after Moses Cone's death, Bertha's unmarried sisters, Sophia and Clementine Lindau, moved into Flat Top Manor house. The three sisters lived at the North Carolina estate during the summer and fall, and at Sophia's home on Eutaw Place in Baltimore during the winter and spring.<sup>61</sup>

52. Ibid., 54, citing *Greensboro Patriot*, June 18, 1902.

53. Ibid., 54-55 citing *Greensboro Patriot*, June 18, 1902.

54. Noblitt, 47-48, citing Miscellaneous Journal, Blue Ridge Parkway Archives; J. D. Brown Ledger Book, 172; Clyde Downs, interview by Tom Robbins and Kent Cave, November 21, 1975, transcript in "Moses Cone Fact Book," volume 2, Blue Ridge Parkway Library.

55. Ibid., 85-86, citing Time Book for 1913 and Wood Ledgers for 1925 and 1926, Blue Ridge Parkway Archives.

56. Ibid., 86, citing Maribeth Crandell, *Moses H. Cone, His Family, His Fortune, and His Life* (Greensboro, North Carolina: Cone Printing Services, 1977), 5.

57. Ibid., 88.

58. Ibid. After school consolidation, Bertha Cone arranged for the building to be given to the Sandy Flat Baptist Church for continued use.

59. Noblitt, 110-111, citing *Charlotte Daily Observer*, December 9, 1908, and December 10, 1908; *Greensboro Daily News*, December 10, 1908.

60. Ibid., 113-114; Indenture, May 30, 1911.

61. Ibid., 120, citing Nancy Lindau Lewis and Judith Lindau McConnell, interview by Noblitt, October 6, 1990; Edward Cone, interview by Noblitt, July 27, 1993.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

Bertha Cone was determined to carry on her husband's work at the estate. In addition to running the household, a task that had always been her responsibility, Bertha now managed the tenants and supervised the maintenance of the grounds and infrastructure. Although she had some familiarity with basic farm operations before Moses died, Bertha expanded her knowledge of the subject by subscribing to and reading farm journals and magazines, as well as through experience gained in running the estate.<sup>62</sup> Following her husband's death, Bertha Cone subscribed to *Progressive Farmer*.<sup>63</sup>

Farming operations at Flat Top Estate were expanded by Bertha Cone in the 1910s to include dairy operations. In 1913, D.M. Sullivan, an employee of Proximity Manufacturing, designed a twelve-stall dairy that was constructed at Flat Top. The Flat Top Manor Dairy was the first Grade A dairy in Watauga County and supplied milk to nearby hotels. The dairy also sold cream to the Catawba Creamery in Hickory, where it was processed into butter.<sup>64</sup>

In addition to expanding farming operations, Bertha Cone also made several improvements to enhance the efficiency of the farm, particularly with regard to apple growing. In keeping with her husband's desire for the orchards to demonstrate the value of scientific pomology, Bertha invited W. N. Hutt, a North Carolina state horticulturist, to the orchards in 1912 to demonstrate the best methods of picking and packing apples to her employees as well as other local farmers.<sup>65</sup> Harvesting apples from the China Orchard had always been extremely labor intensive, as apples had to be transported up the mountainside using wooden sleds. In 1914, construction began on a cable and rail system that transported boxes of apples in 12 by 4 foot wooden carts 1,700 feet up the hillside to the engine house near the Yonahlossee Turnpike.<sup>66</sup> In the 1920s, apple harvests increased from 20,000 bushels a year to more than 40,000 bushels a year. The estate realized a profit of nearly \$60,000 a year from apple sales during this time.<sup>67</sup>

In addition to providing a source of income, the farm also afforded a significant supply of fresh produce, meat, and dairy products. During the winter months, Bertha arranged for food to be shipped to her home in Baltimore, while farm products were also sent to friends and relatives in Greensboro, Atlantic City, and Baltimore. Even Gertrude Stein, a friend of Moses Cone's sisters Claribel and Etta, received apples from Flat Top in Paris, and several bushels of apples were sent to American soldiers in Europe during World War I.<sup>68</sup>

In 1916, a small landslide blocked the spillway at the Trout Lake dam during a two-day storm that caused heavy flooding throughout much of western North Carolina. The quickly rising water ruptured a 120-foot section of the dam and ran down the mountainside, destroying two residences. Bertha never rebuilt the dam at Trout Lake.

Other problems plagued Flat Top Estate during the 1920s and 1930s. For example, when the gate valve on the Bass Lake dam broke and the lake was drained to allow repair, a portion of the earthen dam slumped, necessitating extensive and costly repairs. By 1927, a chestnut blight eliminated the American chestnut trees from the property, leaving only the trunks of the dead trees.<sup>69</sup>

The onset of the automobile brought about new issues that concerned Bertha Cone. In 1928, the State of North Carolina announced plans to widen the highway leading from Linville to Blowing Rock. Bertha was worried that the wider highway would result in the loss of the hemlock hedgerow bordering the road at the estate. She expressed her concerns to her brother-in-law Herman Cone and asked him to discuss the issue with the North Carolina road commissioner; as a result, the hedgerow remained.<sup>70</sup>

In 1935, government surveyors began laying out a route of the proposed Blue Ridge Parkway. The road was to run between the manor and Bass Lake; causing Bertha to be concerned that the new road would affect the carriage roads, trees, and shrubs on her property and would interrupt the views from the manor house. Bertha actively opposed the placement of the road through her estate and sought assistance from her brothers-in-law, Ben and Herman Cone. Ben Cone discussed the matter with the North

62. Ibid., 115-117.

63. Ibid., 117.

64. Ibid., 117, citing Charlie Isenhour, interview by Judy Cornett, May 29, 1975, transcript, Blue Ridge Parkway Library; sales receipts and other dairy records, Blue Ridge Parkway Archives.

65. Ibid., 128, citing *Watauga Democrat*, August 29, 1912, October 3, 1912, and October 10, 1912.

66. Ibid., 11, citing F. Y. V Grice, Broderick and Bascom Rope Company, to Mrs. Moses H Cone, October 6, 1913, Blue Ridge Parkway Museum Collection.

67. Ibid., 128, citing Omer Coffey, interview by Noblitt, October 19, 1991; *Watauga Democrat*, May 13, 1926; Time Book, 1914, Blue Ridge Parkway Archives.

68. Ibid.

69. Ibid., 130-133, citing Edward Cone interview; C. A. Reed to Mrs. Bertha L. Cone, September 24, 1930, Blue Ridge Parkway Archives. It was this chestnut blight that effectively wiped out the American chestnut from Eastern hardwood forests.

70. Ibid., 134, citing *Watauga Democrat*, October 23, 1924; Downs, Edward Cone, and Omer Coffey interviews.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

Carolina Highway Commission, while Herman Cone discussed Bertha's concerns with U.S. Senator Robert Reynolds, who was assured by representatives of the Bureau of Public Roads that a final route for the parkway had not yet been chosen.<sup>71</sup>

Surveyors returned to Flat Top in the spring of 1939, prompting further action by Bertha Cone. Bertha began writing to Arno Cammerer, Director of the National Park Service, urging him to preserve her estate. She also hosted North Carolina Congressman Robert Doughton and Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes on a visit to Flat Top, hoping that the beauty of the estate would persuade them to route the proposed road through another location. Bertha even expressed her concerns in a letter to President Franklin Roosevelt.<sup>72</sup>

Eventually, Bertha showed a willingness to compromise and indicated that if the government delayed construction of the road until after her death she would drop her protest. The National Park Service agreed, and construction on the Blue Ridge Parkway at Flat Top did not commence until after Bertha's death.<sup>73</sup>

The involvement of the United States in World War II and the need for soldiers and civilian defense workers raised wages in the American labor market significantly. In response, Bertha raised the pay of her workers and as a result was forced to reduce the number of employees at Flat Top from twenty-nine in 1941 to twenty-four in 1945. In addition, Bertha closed the dairy and reduced the acreage of the orchards.<sup>74</sup>

In early June, 1947, Bertha Cone suffered a heart attack. She died several days later, on June 8, at the age of eighty-nine. Local newspapers reported that her estate was worth an estimated \$15 million. As directed by the 1911 agreement, nearly all of her property, including the Cone Company stock and the Flat Top Estate, was left to the trustees of the Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital. All remaining personal property and stocks were divided among charities and relatives according to her will. Bertha bequeathed \$10,000 to the Blowing Rock Hospital and \$15,000 to various Jewish and community organizations in Baltimore, while trust funds were established for relatives. Bertha also stipulated in her will that Flat Top Manor house be closed after her death and never opened again for any purpose.<sup>75</sup>

Upon Moses Cone's death, Bertha Cone and his family established a hospital corporation in his memory; Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital was constructed in Greensboro in 1951. Bertha Cone also provided that Flat Top Estate would become a public park upon her death, and the Moses H. Cone Memorial Park officially opened in 1951.

#### ***Criterion B: Moses Cone, Industrialist***

Under Criterion B, the Flat Top Estate Historic District is significant in the area of industry for its association with the life of Moses Cone (1857–1908), who played a pivotal role in the development of the textile industry in the South and in North Carolina in particular. In partnership with his brother Caesar, Moses Cone reorganized the marketing of textiles by forming a trust composed of southern textile mills. Cone introduced the manufacture of denim in the South and established three new textile mills in Greensboro that were part of the development of that city into a twentieth century industrial center. He became known in the region as the "Denim King."<sup>76</sup> The mills became the center of the Cone's textile empire, which, though no longer under Cone family ownership, continues to produce and market textiles to the present day. The entrepreneurial efforts of Moses Cone during the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries throughout the southeast region affected this industry throughout the country.

Flat Top Estate was a product of the wealth generated by Cone's work in the textile industry, and its development and use reflected his personal interests, intellectual and scientific pursuits, and his aesthetic preferences. The estate not only served as Moses Cone's summer residence, but was also largely created in response to his personal direction. Cone took an active role in the design and management of the estate. The present-day Moses H. Cone Memorial Park encompasses and preserves Flat Top Estate, the property most closely associated with the life of Cone in North Carolina.

Moses Cone was born in 1857 in Jonesborough, Tennessee, to German Jewish immigrants Herman and Helen Guggenheimer Cone. Herman Cone had immigrated to the United States in 1846 and initially worked as a salesman, changing his last name from

71. Ibid., 135–136, citing Herman Cone to Bertha Cone, April 15, 1935, and April 13, 1935, Cone Mills Archives; Thomas H. Donald, Bureau of Public Roads, to Senator Robert Reynolds; April 23, 1935, Cone Mills Archives.

72. Ibid., 136–137, citing Mrs. Moses H. Cone to President Franklin D. Roosevelt, July 14, 1939.

73. Ibid., 137, citing Mrs. Moses H. Cone to Arthur E. Demaray, July 28, 1939, "Moses Cone Fact Book," volume 2.

74. Ibid., 137–138, citing Pay Ledgers, Blue Ridge Parkway Archives.

75. Ibid., 139–141, citing Bertha Cone will.

76. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 86.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

Kahn in 1850.<sup>77</sup> Prior to the Civil War, Herman Cone and his brother-in-law Jacob Adler owned a dry goods store in Jonesborough. The partners closed the business after the outbreak of the war and purchased farms outside of Jonesborough. At the conclusion of the war, Adler and Herman Cone returned to their retail business with a third partner, Shelby Shipley. In 1870, the Cone family moved to Baltimore, Maryland, where Herman Cone opened Guggenheimer, Cone & Company, a wholesale grocery business.<sup>78</sup>

In the early 1880s, Herman Cone moved his family to a brownstone at 1607 Eutaw Place in Baltimore. Eutaw Place was home to the Baltimore elite beginning in the 1850s. In the 1880s, several affluent German Jewish families, including the Cones, began to move into the neighborhood. Like the Cones, the majority of the residents of Eutaw Street did not come from wealthy, previously established families, but instead had gained their wealth through their own business ventures. Joseph Friedenwald, the President of the Crown Cork and Seal Company, and his family lived at 1916 Eutaw Place and were among the Cone's most prominent neighbors. The Friedenwalds had a 1,200-acre summer estate near Glyndon, Maryland, approximately 20 miles northwest of Baltimore. The heart of the German Jewish society in Baltimore was the Phoenix Club. Founded in 1886 as a literary and social club, the Phoenix Club was located at 1505 Eutaw Place, approximately one block away from the Cone's brownstone, and served as a gathering place for the community.<sup>79</sup>

In 1878, the two oldest Cone sons, Moses and Ceasar, entered the family grocery business and worked as travelling salesmen. The brothers travelled throughout the eastern United States and spent time in the South. Due to the poor economic conditions in the South following Reconstruction, the Cones' customers were often forced to barter textiles in exchange for the groceries and cigars being sold by Ceasar and Moses. The Cones were further introduced to the textile industry as they sold and traded fabrics in their grocery store. As a result, the Cone brothers were able to develop relationships with the owners of cotton mills in the South during this time.<sup>80</sup> Beginning in the 1880s, the Cone brothers began to invest in Southern textile mills, and by the end of the decade Moses Cone was president of the C.E. Graham Manufacturing Company in Asheville, North Carolina. Charles Graham, a customer of the Cones, turned to them to help finance a new textile mill in 1887. Despite Moses Cone's new position as president of the manufacturing firm, he continued to travel and work for the family wholesale grocery firm. Encouraged by their relationships with southern mills, the Cone brothers entered the clothing manufacturing business and, along with Simon Lowman and Charles Burger, opened Cone Brothers, Lowman and Burger Clothing Manufacturers in Baltimore.<sup>81</sup>

In 1888, after a nearly four-year courtship, Moses Cone married Bertha Lindau, whose family lived near the Cones on Eutaw Place. Bertha's parents, like Herman and Helen Cone, were German Jewish immigrants. Following their marriage, Moses and Bertha moved to a home at 1524 Eutaw Place, less than a block away from the Cone family residence.<sup>82</sup> Moses and Bertha Cone's residence is no longer extant.

In 1890, Moses and Ceasar Cone established the Cone Export and Commission Company in New York City. Their father proceeded to liquidate the family wholesale grocery company, in order to turn the capital over to his sons to help them with their newly established business. Later that year the new firm began to market and export the products of the mills it represented. The Cones also provided loans to mill owners while offering advice on mill operations. The new company had some success; however, an economic panic in 1892 undermined the financial stability of several mills in which the Cones had invested and some of their main contracts were not renewed. As a result, later that year the Cones took control of the C.E. Graham plant in Asheville, North Carolina, in which they had first invested in the 1880s, renaming it the Asheville Cotton Mill.<sup>83</sup> At this time, the headquarters of the Cone Export and Commission Company was relocated from New York City to Greensboro, North Carolina, likely to be closer to the mills.

In 1893, the Cones established the Southern Finishing Mill in Greensboro. Greensboro was chosen over Charlotte due to its proximity to railroads and larger markets. The finishing of textiles refers to the process performed on fabric after production to improve the look, performance, or feel of the textile. The new mill would be the first in the South to deal exclusively with the

77. Noblitt, 4, citing Sydney Cone, Jr., ed., "The Cones from Bavaria," typed manuscript, volume 1: 3, 20, Greensboro, North Carolina, Public Library.

78. Ibid., 7.

79. Gilbert Sandler, *Jewish Baltimore: A Family Album* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 37–42.

80. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 86.

81. Noblitt, 10–11.

82. Ibid., 9–10.

83. Ibid., 12–14.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

finishing of textiles.<sup>84</sup> At the time of the mill's construction, few southern mills had the capacity to finish textiles, as many were small and simply could not afford to incorporate this process into their plant operations.

Shortly after establishing the Southern Finishing Mill, the Cone brothers saw an opportunity to expand the North Carolina textile industry further by introducing the production of denim to the region. At this time nearly all of the denim in the United States was being produced by Levi Strauss and Company in New England. The brothers convinced W. A. Erwin, a plant manager, to produce denim that would be sold by the Cone Export and Commission Company. After three years, Erwin decided not to continue to produce denim, leaving the Cones unable to fulfill their customers' denim orders.<sup>85</sup> As a result, the Cones decided to design, build, and manage their own textile mill for the production of denim. In 1895, the Cones purchased nearly 1,600 acres of land from a defunct steel and iron company in Greensboro. That year Proximity Mill, so named because of its proximity to both the railroad and the cotton fields, was constructed. The construction of the new mill, which would produce blue and brown denims on 250 looms, was funded by Moses and Caesar, along with other investors. The Cones hired highly experienced labor from both the North and South to ensure that operations would run smoothly at the new mill.<sup>86</sup>

In early 1898, the Cones' first mill, the Asheville Cotton Mill, made national news due to the high quality of the product being produced. An article in the *New York Times* stated, "... those Asheville mills are turning out a class of fine goods not surpassed in New England or elsewhere and, equaled by few in the South."<sup>87</sup>

During the late nineteenth century, textile manufacturing operations shifted from the northern United States to the South. The move was largely spurred by the lower cost of labor in the southern states. Unlike workers in the north, the southern labor force was not unionized and, as a result, paid lower wages. Textile workers in the South typically worked more than 60 hours a week, as compared to 40 hours for workers in similar jobs in the Northeast. In 1898, Moses Cone and his brother Caesar joined a group of Southern industrialists who travelled to Washington, D.C., to speak out against a proposed amendment to the United States Constitution sponsored by a Massachusetts congressman which sought to establish uniform hours of labor across the country, which may have slowed or halted the shift of industrial jobs from New England to the South.<sup>88</sup>

In 1899, the Cone brothers, with assistance from Emanuel and Herman Sternberger of South Carolina, opened a second mill in Greensboro. This mill, which produced flannel, was known as Revolution Cotton Mill. In 1902, the Cones began construction on a third mill in Greensboro. White Oak Mill was constructed on more than 1,500 acres of land adjacent to the Proximity Mill. The Cones hoped that the new mill, which housed 1,000 looms, would allow them to control the United States denim industry.<sup>89</sup> At the time it was completed in 1905, White Oak Mill was the largest denim manufacturing plant in the world. By 1914, the White Oak and Proximity mills had 3,500 looms and were one of the largest centers of denim manufacturing in the world.<sup>90</sup> Proximity Mill has been largely demolished, while the White Oak Mill still operates as a mill today. Revolution Mill is also still intact, though the complex has been adaptively reused for non-industrial purposes. While White Oak Mill continues to operate as a mill, it is an industrial site completed only three years prior to Cone's death; therefore it does not have the same personal connection to Moses Cone and his life that Flat Top Estate does.

In addition to establishing mills in Greensboro, the Cones also developed villages to house the mill workers in the early 1900s. The villages, which were established adjacent to the mills, contained homes, stores, schools, churches, athletic fields, and gymnasiums. A separate mill village was developed to house African-American workers and their families. In addition to housing, the Cones provided recreation and entertainment opportunities for their employees.<sup>91</sup>

- 
84. Ibid., 14, citing Gary Richard Freeze, "Model Mill Men of the New South: Paternalism and Methodism in the Odell Cotton Mills of North Carolina, 1877-1908" (Ph. D. diss., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1988), 122; Diane L. F. Afflick, *Just New from the Mills: Printed Cottons in America, Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (North Andover, Massachusetts: Museum of American Textile History, 1987), 21.
85. Ellen B. Hirschland and Nancy H. Ramage, *The Cone Sisters of Baltimore: Collecting at Full Tilt* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2008), 23-24.
86. Noblitt, 16, citing *Greensboro Patriot*, March 4, 1896.
87. Neva J. Specht, Ph.D, Carrie A. Streeter, MA, and Joseph W. Otto, MA, Appalachian State University, *Historic Furnishings Report for Flat Top Manor, Moses H. Cone Memorial Park, Highlands District, Blue Ridge Parkway, Blowing Rock, North Carolina*, undated., citing *New York Times*. "Southern Cotton Goods," 8 March 1898.
88. Ibid., citing *Charlotte Daily Observer*, 2 February 1898.
89. Ibid., 17.
90. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 86, citing Andrews, 1987, 69.
91. Ibid., citing Buxton 1987, 29.



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

The Cones were paternalistic with regard to the management of their mills and provided strict rules for employees living in the mill villages. For example, employees who spoke with union representatives risked being dismissed from their jobs.<sup>92</sup> In 1900, the National Union of Textile Workers (NUTW) began to organize workers in southern mills. Upon learning that the NUTW was organizing at their Greensboro mills, the Cones shut down operations and locked out their employees. Those employees who supported unionizing were required to sign an agreement renouncing the union. Those who refused to sign the agreement were dismissed.<sup>93</sup>

Although he received limited formal schooling, Moses Cone was widely read and self-educated.<sup>94</sup> The results of his studies were evident in the planning, design, and management of his business as well as his country estate. In addition to his mills, Flat Top Estate was a primary focus of Moses Cone's life in his later years. He continued to play an active role in the day-to-day management of the estate and showed a similarly paternalistic interest in his employees at the estate. While the estate was not a source of Cone's wealth, it was where he chose to use his wealth. Flat Top Estate symbolizes the life of Moses Cone more than any other place associated with him. As Firth notes:

Flat Top Manor was not just Moses Cone's summer residence. It was very much his own creation and the consuming interest of his last years. The estate was not the source of his great wealth, but rather illustrates the ends to which he chose to put that wealth. The design of the estate was the work of this self-educated man. He reportedly took an active role in its day-to-day management and showed a paternalistic concern for the welfare of his employees. That it was his crowning achievement is confirmed by the decision of his wife and family to dedicate it as a public park in his memory.<sup>95</sup>

#### ***Criterion C: Landscape Architecture and Architecture***

Under Criterion C, the Flat Top Estate Historic District is significant for the design of its landscape and buildings in the areas of Landscape Architecture and Architecture. The design of the landscape, and in particular the extensive system of carriage drives and their associated plantings, vistas, stonework, and stormwater management features, possesses a high artistic value. Flat Top Estate is significant at a national level for its landscape design, while Flat Top Manor house is significant at a state level for its architectural design. The estate incorporates many of the characteristics of a turn of the twentieth century Country Place era estate—including forests, pastures, meadows, lakes and ponds, and gardens, as well as an imposing manor house and numerous outbuildings. These are designed as a vernacular, rural, mountain environment rather than a formal “high design” style as exemplified by grand estates such as Biltmore. The estate is also an unusual surviving example of a designed landscape representative of the Country Place era, with exemplary orchestration of various natural and constructed features to convey an appreciation for the natural environment, particularly as exemplified by the carriage roads.

As noted by Ian Firth, the Cone estate and the Carnegie estate on Cumberland Island are the only examples of Country Place era landscapes within the care of the National Park Service in the Southeast. In addition, Flat Top Estate and Acadia are the only landscapes within the national parks system that include a designed network of carriageways. Comparing Flat Top Estate and Cumberland Island, Firth commented, “These landscapes encapsulate many of the important ideas of their time—ideas in the realms of landscape and architectural aesthetics, scientific agriculture, environmental conservation, and social and economic theory. On Cumberland Island environmental conservation was a dominant theme. At Flat Top Estate the primary achievement was in the fields of landscape architecture and engineering with the development of the extraordinary system of carriage roads.”<sup>96</sup> He also noted, “While each of the carriage roads has its particular charm, the two mountain roads are the most spectacular. Their ascent through a series of picturesque forest and pastoral scenes to the sublime vistas of the mountain tops had been planned with great skill and a sensitivity to the potential of each site. These roads are very different from Olmsted's Approach Road at Biltmore, but they can be ranked with that work as the finest pieces of scenic road design of their period.”<sup>97</sup>

#### ***Landscape Architecture***

The design of the landscape for the Flat Top Estate was of great interest to Moses Cone. No element of the estate was planned without consideration for all of the other elements; “the house and gardens, roads, lakes, pastures, and orchards represented a

92. Noblitt, 18–22, citing Melton A. McLaurin, *Paternalism and Protest: Southern Cotton Mill Workers and Organized Labor, 1875–1905* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing, 1971), 140; Lenoir Topic, June 6, 1900.

93. Ibid., 20–21, citing *Charlotte Daily Observer*, May 9, 1900, and May 15, 1900; transcript of meeting between Ceasar Cone, O. P. Dickerson, J.C. Smith, and others, Cone Mills Archives; *Greensboro Patriot*, May 9, 1900.

94. Ibid., 84.

95. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 86.

96. Ibid., 85.

97. Ibid.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

single composition. Each had to be evaluated for its relationship and impact on the other.”<sup>98</sup> Cone, in consultation with his wife Bertha and architect Orlo Epps, selected the site for the house, while Moses and Bertha Cone collaborated in the determination of alignments for the various carriage drives that led to each of the important scenic attractions associated with the expansive estate.

The extensive network of carriage drives is a nationally significant group of structures. The drives served a practical function—to connect different locations across the irregularly shaped and expansive estate—but aesthetic considerations were key to the development of the drives. Cone controlled the alignment and orientation of each portion of the drives to develop views and vistas. As Firth notes, “What makes the Cone roads so remarkable is their alignment. While others were striving to achieve smooth curves with gradual transitions, Moses Cone seems to have delighted in maximizing the number of sharp turns and switchbacks. While this would have been dangerous on public roads, on his private roads it enabled him not only to maintain a gentle gradient but to arrange a gentle sequence of views across the estate. These views gave each road a unique character, and it is the alignment of the roads to take advantage of their setting which constitutes Moses Cone’s finest artistic achievement.”<sup>99</sup>

Carriage roads were an important feature of several country estates constructed in the nineteenth century. Firth speculates that Cone may have been familiar with the writings of Hermann von Puckler-Muskau as he planned the carriage drives.<sup>100</sup> The German prince and amateur landscape gardener created roads in the park at Muskau in Silesia in the mid-nineteenth century (Muskauer Park on the present-day border between Bad Muskau, Germany, and Łęknica, Poland).

In the United States, George Vanderbilt commissioned the noted landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted to lay out and direct construction of roads at Biltmore in the late nineteenth century. Olmsted designed a series of roads that travelled through a variety of trees and other vegetation, creating a landscape that appeared to have been created by nature.<sup>101</sup> The road system at Biltmore is composed of pleasure, service, and farm roads. Bridges and culverts carry these paved and unpaved roads over creeks and other water features. Olmsted’s design for the road system, combined with his careful placement of trees and other vegetation, created specific views for the visitors arriving to Biltmore.<sup>102</sup>

John D. Rockefeller, Jr., constructed nearly 60 miles of carriage roads on Mount Desert Island in Maine between 1913 and 1940. He sought to create a system of roads that would allow users to experience the landscape and thus feel restored by nature. Inspired by his family’s estate Forest Hill, near Cleveland, Rockefeller engaged several engineers to assist him in the design and execution of his carriage road project. He sought to locate the roads in such a way that would maximize views of both the islands features as well as the carriage road bridges.<sup>103</sup> Rockefeller reportedly visited Flat Top estate in the years following Moses Cone’s death.<sup>104</sup> The carriage roads, bridges, and gatehouses on Mount Desert Island, which are part of Acadia National Park, were listed as significant examples of landscape architecture in the National Register of Historic Places on November 14, 1979.

In many ways, the design and purpose of private carriage drive systems serve as a precedent for the automobile parkways of the twentieth century. As Firth notes, “Nineteenth century estate roads designed for pleasure driving were the forerunners of twentieth century recreational highways.”<sup>105</sup> As exemplified at Flat Top Estate, travelers are led through carefully considered sequences of vistas across natural features such as mountains, forests, and streams as well as man-made landscapes of fields, pastures, and orchards. In the case of the carriage drives, Cone used sharp hairpin turns that required carriages to almost stop, creating opportunities to perceive vistas across the estate.

In early 1899, Moses Cone hired J. M. Wolfe, a Greensboro contractor, to construct carriage roads at Flat Top. The roads are believed to have been designed by Cone himself, who is said to have walked or driven along the line of a proposed road followed by a crew who would mark the route. Cone reportedly retained W. G. Potter, a civil engineer from Greensboro, to assist him with any engineering issues with the carriage roads.<sup>106</sup> Construction on the roads began in May 1899. The carriage roads were constructed of hard-packed dirt, usually 12 to 15 feet in width, and comprised of a series of switchbacks that allowed the road grades to be kept at no more than five percent, reducing washouts and other problems associated with steeper slopes. The gentler

98. Noblitt, 48.

99. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 85.

100. Ibid.

101. Noblitt, 48.

102. Hood, *Biltmore Estate National Historic Landmark Nomination (Additional Documentation and Boundary Reduction)*.

103. Lauren G. Meier, Historical Landscape Architect, Lee Terzis, Historian; revisions by Nancy J. Brown, Historical Landscape Architect, *National Register Nomination. Historic Resources of Acadia National Park Multiple Property Listing* (Brookline, Massachusetts: Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, June 2001, revised June 2005).

104. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 85, citing Rieley and Brouse (1989), 5.

105. Ibid.

106. Ibid., 22.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

slopes also made it easier to haul farm produce and equipment. Nearly 22 miles of roads had been constructed by the end of the summer of 1899, and nearly 25 miles of roads were constructed by 1905.<sup>107</sup> It was in that year that Moses and Bertha Cone went on a world tour, from which Moses Cone returned in poor health.

Although the Cones kept surreys, which were pulled by horses at a fast trot, the carriage roads with their many hairpin bends were not suitable for coach driving. Instead, they were intended rather to be driven along at a leisurely pace so that passengers could enjoy the scenery. The plantings along the carriage drives at Flat Top Estate, to be viewed from horseback or from slow-moving carriages, are also a significant aspect of their design. The extensive plantings notably used native species; Cone was rigorous in excluding exotic species, although blending exotic and native plantings was common practice at the time among landscape architects.<sup>108</sup> In some areas along the roads Cone planted rows of sugar maples, while in others he planted groves of balsam fir. The landscape was carefully developed by Cone to reveal views and to provide a varying experience from season to season. Cone arranged the tree plantings to frame sequential views, allowing riders to wind through the tree-lined roads to a succession of lookouts. For example, near Flat Top Manor house the roads travelled through lines of formally planted trees and pastures before entering heavily forested areas, from which riders emerged at carefully designed lookouts.<sup>109</sup>

The carriage roads also were used when riding horses and walking by the Cones and their guests. The Cones also opened the carriage roads to residents of the Blowing Rock area, who were allowed to walk or ride horses, and to enjoy the views. However, neither the Cones and their guests, nor the public, used the carriage roads for travel by automobiles.

No roads were built after Moses Cone's death or under Bertha Cone's management of the estate. Bertha Cone did, however, have additional planting carried out alongside the roads. After Bertha Cone's death, the construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway interrupted some of the carriage roads. Parkway planners reconnected some of the roads by constructing overpasses and bridges to provide grade-separated crossings of the corridors.<sup>110</sup> The carriage drive system at Flat Top Estate was recognized as one of the most significant features of the designed landscape in the deed transferring the property to the federal government. In taking over the property, the National Park Service was specifically obligated to, "at its own expense, forever keep open and maintain a total mileage of usable roads, ways, and drives upon the said estate not less in amount than the total mileage of usable roads, ways, and drives upon said estate at the time of this conveyance."<sup>111</sup> The carriage drives at Flat Top Estate remain nearly intact today.<sup>112</sup>

In addition to the carriage drives, the landscape of Flat Top Estate incorporates other designed features of interest that contribute to the character of the historic district, including gardens, deer parks, and water features, as well as the forests and orchards described above. While Moses Cone did not establish the elaborate formal gardens seen at other country estates such as Biltmore and Reynolda, he did plant gardens at his estate. Southeast of the manor house was a terraced fruit and vegetable garden, sited on the slope below the carriage house. This garden was planted in April 1900 and included a variety of raspberries, strawberries, rhubarbs, asparagus, carrots, onion, lettuce, radishes, beans, sprouts, spinach, and beets, for use by the estate. In later years, flowers were grown in the terraced garden as well. Behind the Manor House the Cones also planted fruit, vegetable, and flower gardens. These included a cutting bed of peonies. The other location on the estate where ornamental plantings were prevalent was around Bass Lake. Here, Bertha Cone planted extensive beds of white hydrangeas framed by nearby evergreen tree plantations. Other than these more formal gardens, the landscape at Flat Top estate was largely treated as a picturesque park that emphasized and enhanced the natural setting.<sup>113</sup>

Between 1899 and 1908, Moses Cone constructed two deer parks at Flat Top Estate to house and protect more than 100 white-tailed deer. The Cones imported the deer from Pennsylvania and Long Island, as hunting had reduced the number of wild deer in the Blowing Rock area. The first deer park, approximately 15 acres in size, was developed in 1899 next to Flat Top Orchard and was enclosed by a wire fence to allow the deer to be visible from the entrance road. The second deer park, constructed in 1908, was nearly 200 acres in size and was situated on Rich Mountain. A ten-foot-high paling fence surrounded the park. Cone

107. Noblitt, 48–49, citing F. S. Mumford Diary, July 6, 1900; *Lenoir Semi-Weekly News*, September 8, 1899; Firth, 11.

108. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 85.

109. Noblitt, 49–50.

110. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 69.

111. Indenture, January 21, 1949 between Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital and the United States of America.

112. In the 1993 *Cultural Landscape Report*, Firth compares the design and character of the carriage roads with that of the Blue Ridge Parkway, and explores how the carriageways and the parkway represent the evolution of recreational travel at the time. Further discussion of the relationship between Moses H. Cone Memorial Park and the Blue Ridge Parkway is outside the scope of this study, and is discussed separately in the National Historic Landmark documentation in preparation by the National Park Service.

113. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 60; Noblitt, 52.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

prohibited his tenants and the public from hunting on his estate. Deer remained on the property until 1920, when they were sold by Bertha Cone.<sup>114</sup>

To further enhance the estate, Moses Cone had two lakes constructed. Trout Lake, situated at Flannery Fork Road below Rich Mountain, and Bass Lake, located between Flat Top Manor house and the village. Bass Lake's location below Flat Top Manor house provided an excellent reflective foreground for viewing the house as visitors entered the estate. In addition to the lakes, small ponds and pools were constructed at the estate to enhance the natural scene. In the middle of Flat Top Orchard was Upper Pond. The pond was retained by an earthen dam. Two heart-shaped pools were situated near the Upper Pond, above Bass Lake. It is believed that the heart-shaped pools, which were stocked with trout, were added by Bertha Cone as they are not shown on a 1909 map of the estate. Another small pool was located northwest of Trout Lake.<sup>115</sup>

### Architecture

Flat Top Manor, built at the turn of the twentieth century as a summer residence for Moses Cone and his family, is significant at a state level for architectural design as a Colonial Revival residence. Designed by the noted, Cornell University-trained architect, Orlo Epps (1884–1926), Flat Top Manor is significant as an early example of Colonial Revival style in North Carolina and as a particularly grand, fully realized, and intact example of this building type. Cone initially contacted noted architect Stanford White of the architectural firm of McKim, Mead, and White. However, White informed Bertha Cone's that he was not interested in the job unless the Cones were prepared to spend \$100,000 on the home. Upon White's rejection, the Cones hired Epps, whose practice was located in Washington, D.C. The Cones were familiar with Epps through his previous practice in Greensboro as part of the firm Epps & Hackett, which was responsible for the design of Proximity Mill.<sup>116</sup>

Born in Elkhart, Indiana, in 1864, Orlo Epps moved to Oneonta, New York, at the age of sixteen. He attended Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, graduating in 1887. Epps was thus a part of the first generation of architects schooled in America.<sup>117</sup> Upon graduation from Cornell, and after a brief period of service in the U.S. Army, Epps returned to Oneonta to practice architecture. In 1894, Epps moved to Greensboro, North Carolina, where he served as a professor of mathematics and physics for seven years at the Agricultural and Mechanical College. While in Greensboro, Epps was also a partner in the firm Epps and Hackett, for which he designed buildings including the Foust Building (1891) for the State Normal and Industrial School for Girls, now the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Epps was also responsible for the designs of the Knights of Pythias Building (1891) and the B. J. Fisher Hotel (1892), in Greensboro. In 1895, the firm of Epps and Hackett was hired by the Cone brothers to design Proximity Mill. In the late 1890s, Epps moved to Washington, D.C., where he was practicing when Moses and Bertha Cone approached him to design their new manor house. His relationship with the Cone family continued to bring Epps commissions, and in 1902, he designed the Cone Export and Commission Building in Greensboro.<sup>118</sup> Epps left Washington in 1905 and returned to Oneonta, New York, where he started a hardware business. In 1908, after a major fire in Oneonta, Epps returned to architectural practice. In 1911 he opened his own office and continued to practice architecture until his death in 1926. During this time he designed a number of buildings in New York State, including the State School of Agriculture in Delhi, New York.<sup>119</sup>

Epps designed the Cone Manor House in the Colonial Revival style, which became popular in the 1880s after national interest in the Colonial period and the early history of the nation was piqued during Centennial celebrations held in Philadelphia in 1876. The style, which sought to revive stylistic components of English architecture of the Georgian period, continued to gain popularity in the 1890s and beyond. Colonial Revival buildings were often characterized by a primary facade with symmetrically balanced windows and an accentuated center door, normally with a decorative crown (pediment) supported by pilasters; doors with overhead fanlights or sidelights; windows frequently placed in adjacent pairs, and having double-hung sash, usually with multi-pane glazing in one or both sash.<sup>120</sup> Flat Top Manor is characterized by a symmetrically balanced primary facade and an accentuated front door defined by a projecting portico, and paired multi-pane, double-hung windows. A porch complete with ionic columns extends across the main facade of the home. Unlike other early houses of the period in North Carolina that

114. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 55.

115. *Ibid.*, 57–58.

116. Noblitt, 36–37.

117. Surber and Barber Architects, Inc., *Moses H. Cone Manor House: Historic Structure Report*, 18.

118. *Ibid.*

119. *Ibid.*, 18–19.

120. Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006), 321–326. While it can be argued that the manor house is not a pure example of the Colonial Revival style, it strongly exhibits features of the style and is even more characteristic of the hipped roof without full-width porch principal subtype identified by Virginia and Lee McAlester.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

incorporated Neo-Classical or Neo-Colonial details such as columns, pediments, and Palladian windows, in Queen Anne-style buildings, Flat Top Manor was an early example of the Colonial Revival style.<sup>121</sup>

As noted by architectural historian Catherine Bishir:

The Colonial Revival style resulted, in large part, from expositions during the last quarter of the nineteenth century that showed Americans what their culture was becoming and what American architecture should be. The 1876 Centennial Exposition generated a burst of patriotic enthusiasm for America's past, including its architecture from the colonial period. The principal buildings at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition exhibited Beaux Arts classicism. At the same time the buildings representing individual state exhibits tended to be more residential in character, highlighting each state's typical – which usually meant colonial – architecture. Often these were free interpretations of “colonial” themes that for many included not only the actual colonial period, but also the early nineteenth century and – especially in the South – the antebellum period. . . . The new passion for colonial architecture reflected a larger concern for stabilizing the identity of American culture in the face of massive immigration, class strife, and burgeoning industrialization. The Colonial Revival style was extolled as the architecture of Americanness, patriotism, stability, and longevity. For industrialist Moses Cone and his wife – both of German Jewish ancestry – who consciously adopted the symbols and actions of old-stock Americans, the selection of the Colonial Revival style for their house was a natural choice.<sup>122</sup>

Together, with Epps, the Cones selected a site for the manor house at an elevation of 4,000 feet, which afforded panoramic views to the south and east. Construction on the house began in September 1899 and continued until early 1900. The *Watauga Democrat* reported that construction of the house cost an estimated \$60,000 to \$75,000.<sup>123</sup> The completed wood-framed structure was a twenty-three room, 13,795 square foot mansion, two-and-one-half-stories tall and symmetrical in form. The exterior featured an expansive wrap-around porch with Ionic columns and a balustraded roof deck; front steps rising to the semicircular porch entrance bay; and Colonial Revival-style details including a pedimented center bay, fluted corner pilasters, a dentilated cornice, and Classical dormers. The interior featured a hall, parlor/music room, library, dining room, and billiard room in the front portion of the main floor, with living spaces and bedrooms on the second floor, and additional bedrooms in the third floor attic. Service spaces included the kitchens, pantries, servants' hall, basement, and offices. The interior public and family rooms were ornamented with Classical and Colonial Revival details, including the grand stair, mantels, paneled doors and wainscots, cornice moldings, and door and window surrounds. The house featured numerous modern conveniences, including tiled bathrooms; a service wing with built-in cabinets, marble sinks, hot and cold running water, and both ceramic tile and linoleum flooring; acetylene lights; a telephone system; and a wood-burning central heating system. Materials and furnishings brought by teams of oxen over mountain roads from Lenoir, with materials purchased from as far away as California and household furnishings brought from Europe and the Far East. Firth notes, “The Manor House would have been unremarkable in a different setting, but its construction was an extraordinary undertaking in the mountains.”

The house has not undergone any major structural alterations since its first construction, but in 1909 Bertha Cone expanded the north wall of the kitchen by 10 feet.<sup>124</sup> In 1915, the telephone system was improved and the house was outfitted with electricity in the mid-1920s. The next alteration was done by the National Park Service for increased protection from fire; in the winter of 1950 the extensive plumbing connections were modified to “enable the use of the 2 standpipes without activating the entire system.”<sup>125</sup> The west portion of the sun porch was added by the National Park Service after 1960.<sup>126</sup> The 1970s saw the addition of public restrooms on the west end of the porch. In 2008, the restrooms were removed from the porch in order to restore the house to its original historical design. Restrooms were moved to the near-by carriage house. In the last ten years all of the balustrades on the veranda were replaced. Other than routine painting, roofing, and maintenance, the aforementioned structural alterations represent the only significant changes to Flat Top Manor to date.

121. Flat Top Manor was one of the earliest Colonial Revival-style houses built in the state and is certainly the grandest and most fully realized of those that survive (Laura Phillips, draft National Register Nomination, citing an oral interview with Catherine W. Bishir, October 8, 2009). Phillips also notes that the mountainside setting at Flat Top, where a rustic lodge might be the expected architectural expression, made the Colonial Revival style manor house particularly impressive.

122. Catherine W. Bishir, *North Carolina Architecture*, Portable Edition (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press for the Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina, Inc., 2005), 489–490.

123. Ibid., 42, 46; *Watauga Democrat*, January 24, 1901.

124. *Historic Furnishings Plan*, 22, citing Surber and Barber Architects, Inc., *Moses H. Cone Manor House, Historic Structure Report*, 3.

125. Ibid., citing *Superintendent's Monthly Report* for February 1950, Blue Ridge Parkway Archives, Asheville, North Carolina.

126. Ibid., citing Surber and Barber Architects, Inc., *Moses H. Cone Manor House, Historic Structure Report*, 3.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

**Potential for Significance under Criterion D: Historic Archeology**

Further study is needed to determine the National Register significance of Flat Top Estate in the area of historic archeology (non-aboriginal) for its potential to yield information important in history. Although the property has demonstrated a likelihood that it may be determined significant in the future should appropriate investigations be conducted, insufficient information is currently available to assess information potential. Based on limited archeological studies of foundations and building remains from the Cone period, the site is likely to yield information pertaining to nineteenth and early twentieth century lifeways, as well as evidence of the built environment relating to the Cone period. Archeology suggests that below-grade intact resources from this period exist, such as pier stones and other foundation elements of the tenant farm buildings, and remains of the laundry house at the rear of the manor house. These resources have been subjected to little or no disturbance since the buildings were occupied, and limited investigations have yielded domestic refuse reflective of the socioeconomic status of the tenant farmers. Preliminary assessment of these resources indicates seeming integrity and likely contributing status.<sup>127</sup> In addition, investigation of the estate's apple orchard sites, which are associated with an early phase in the development of commercial orchards in the United States, may provide important information about genetic resources, such as rare apple cultivars, of interest to researchers through pollen and phytolith analysis, and orchard management based on investigation of structural deposits.

**Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)**

**Development of District Resources Subsequent to Period of Significance**

Following Bertha Cone's death in 1947, the trustees of the Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital were charged with the task of managing the Moses H. Cone Memorial Park at Flat Top. At the same time the trustees were to build and operate the Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital in Greensboro. It was evident to the trustees that the hospital and park would be competing for the same financial resources and since their first priority was the hospital, the trustees sought to divest themselves of Flat Top Estate. In July 1947, the trustees approached Sam Weems, Superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway, to gauge the National Park Service's interest in assuming ownership and management of the estate.<sup>128</sup>

After years of planning, and in conjunction with the successful completion of Skyline Drive in Shenandoah National Park, construction of the Blue Ridge Parkway had been approved on November 19, 1933.<sup>129</sup> Landscape architect Stanley Abbott and his colleagues sought to highlight the diverse landscape of the parkway and also reveal the "charm and interest of the American countryside" by preserving the cultural history of the surrounding landscape. The 1936 master plan for the parkway called for twenty recreation areas to be established along the parkway, including resources at Humpback Rocks, Norwall Flats, Lick Log Spring, Peaks of Otter, Pine Spur, Smart View, Rocky Knob, and Fisher Peak in Virginia, as well as at Cumberland Knob, the Bluff, Tompkins Knob, Linville Gorge, Crabtree Creek, Mount Mitchell, Craggy Gardens, Bent Creek, Mount Pisgah, Pigeon River Falls, Tennessee Bald, and Richland Balsam in North Carolina.<sup>130</sup> The Moses H. Cone Memorial Park would join these sites as part of the recreational areas associated with the Blue Ridge Parkway.<sup>131</sup>

National Park Service officials, who were surprised by the proposal from the hospital trustees, immediately began to consider acquisition and by the summer of 1947 had visited and inspected the property. Acquiring the property for recreational use would allow the National Park Service to cancel plans to develop recreation areas at Tompkins Knob and Grandfather Mountain. Once the National Park Service had decided to acquire Flat Top Estate, legal obstacles relating to the ownership of the property, as well

127. Discussion with Steven Kidd, NPS BLRI Cultural Resources Specialist and Archeologist (RPA), August 28, 2012. No intensive or systematic archeological testing of the property to determine data potential has been conducted; however, a number of small compliance -driven archeological studies at the estate have revealed evidence of the Cone-period occupation, particularly investigation conducted at the former site of the laundry building near the manor house. (See Jessica McNeil, Archeologist, Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC), memorandum to David W. Morgan, Director, SEAC; subject: Trip Report on Geophysical and Archeological Investigations at Moses Cone Manor, Blue Ridge Parkway, Blowing Rock, North Carolina, August 8-12, 2011, SEAC Acc. 2536, January 26, 2012.)
128. Anne Mitchell Whisnant. *Super-scenic Motorway: A Blue Ridge Parkway History* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 143-144.
129. *Ibid.*, 37-38.
130. Blue Ridge Parkway, "Brief Description of the Recreation Areas Adjacent to the Parkway, to Accompany the Master Plan thereof, Drawn June 3, 1936" (National Park Service, Branch - Plans and Design, Salem, Virginia, 1936).
131. By 1940, only six years after construction began on the Blue Ridge Parkway, nearly 200 miles of the roadway were open to travelers. Construction on the parkway largely stopped with the onset of World War II, as the National Park Service budget fell from \$33.5 million in 1940 to \$4.7 million in 1945.<sup>131</sup> After the end of World War II, the number of visitors to the parkway increased to 1.2 million in 1946, nearly 300,000 more than it had been in 1941. By 1955, the number of parkway visitors had risen to 4.5 million; although visitation increased significantly in the decade following World War II, only thirty-three miles of additional roadway was opened to the public during this period. Whisnant, 267.



Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

as to questions on whether the estate could be transferred to the National Park Service under the 1911 indenture, prevented transfer of the estate for nearly two years. On January 21, 1949, the deed transferring the property to the National Park Service was prepared. However, due to further questions regarding the title to portions of the property that required resolution by the North Carolina Supreme Court, the deed was not recorded until January 13, 1950. The National Park Service took full control of Moses H. Cone Memorial Park at this time.<sup>132</sup>

The National Park Service envisioned the property as an outdoor recreation area, and upon assuming responsibility for the park, began to prepare the site for this function. The dam at Trout Lake, which had been destroyed by a storm in 1916, was repaired and the lake was stocked with rainbow trout in 1952. Construction of a bathhouse and beach was also proposed at the lake; however, these plans were never realized. The grounds and carriage roads remained open to the public for use by hikers and horseback riders, as required by the agreement between the hospital trustees and the National Park Service.

Upon acquisition, the National Park Service also faced the dilemma of what to do with Flat Top Manor and the nearly fifty support structures on the property. A large estate did not complement the parkway designers' vision of the parkway and its adjacent recreation areas, or of the picture they sought to paint of Southern Appalachian mountain farming and lifeways. The National Park Service had no plans to continue operating the farm or the orchards on the property and as a result dismissed all of the tenants except the overseer. During the 1950s, the National Park Service removed all but five of the structures on the estate, including the tenant houses, laundry house, and bowling alley.<sup>133</sup> The five structures retained were the manor house, the carriage house, the apple barn, one servants' house, and the Sandy Flat Church. While the smaller structures were considered useful for storage and office functions, the question of what to do with the manor house remained. Initially, the National Park Service recommended turning Flat Top Manor into a restaurant or offices. These ideas were quickly reconsidered, and in April 1951, Sam Weems approached the Penland School of Handicraft, which was located in Mitchell County, to discuss establishment of a craft training center in the manor. Although the school responded positively to this idea, it was unable to commit sufficient finances to establish the craft center. Weems then approached the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild, which accepted his offer to open a craft center at Flat Top Manor. In addition to selling crafts, local craftspeople gave demonstrations on topics such as spinning and weaving, knotting, and wood carving to visitors.<sup>134</sup> Craft sales at Flat Top Manor were seen as an extension of the pioneer themes seen throughout the parkway.

The Southern Highland Handicraft Guild opened its craft center in the manor house in 1951. In the following year, a pioneer museum exhibit was installed in the house. The craft center proved to be profitable and in the mid-1960s the Guild, in conjunction with the Blue Ridge Parkway, proposed the construction of an "Americana" village on the estate that would show visitors the life of Appalachian mountaineers. The proposed village would include a country store, one-room school house, and church as well as a working farm complete with a farm house, barn, support structures, gardens, fields, and orchards. The plans also called for the construction of a visitor center and outdoor amphitheater to be situated near the manor house. Several new structures to house workshops and demonstration areas, as well as year-round residences for the craftsmen, were also proposed. Despite years of planning, Americana was never constructed, primarily due to logistical and financial problems.<sup>135</sup>

In 1954, the chestnut observation tower constructed at the top of Flat Top Mountain in 1900, to allow visitors to see out over the trees, was replaced by a steel observation tower. In 1955, the town of Blowing Rock was issued a special-use permit by the National Park Service to construct a dam and reservoir along the edge of the park property. The new dam and reservoir provided water to the town of Blowing Rock and also afforded views of a scenic water feature to hikers and horseback riders, complementing the scenery offered at Trout and Bass lakes.<sup>136</sup>

From 1955 to 1957, the two-and-a-half-mile stretch of the Blue Ridge Parkway through the Cone Estate was constructed, incorporating the park as a recreation area associated with the parkway.<sup>137</sup> The parkway was routed not far behind the Manor House, and an entrance road loop with parking was built northeast of the house. Plantings of native rhododendron shielded the house from both the parkway and the entrance loop parking area.<sup>138</sup> Construction of the parkway severed some of the carriage roads, but parkway planners reconnected some of the roads by providing for passage beneath the parkway to allow for access

132. Ibid., 144-145.

133. According to Bob Cherry of NPS BLRI, oral history accounts indicate that the houses were not demolished, but instead were sold through a bidding process. The winning bidder was allowed to dismantle the houses and remove the materials.

134. Noblitt., 148-152.

135. Ibid. 152-155.

136. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 69.

137. Richard Quin, *Blue Ridge Parkway. Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), Report No. NC-42*, 1997, 250.

138. 1961 Park Land Use Maps show plantings shielding the house from the parking area. More information is needed to determine if the planting beds were installed at the same time as the parking loop.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

between the north and south halves of the estate. Rustic stone overpasses constructed on the parkway provided a visual link with the dry laid stone retaining walls used along parts of the estate's carriage road system.<sup>139</sup>

In 1958, two ranch-style houses for park rangers (**two non-contributing buildings**) were built just east of Sandy Flat Gap. The homes were constructed as part of the Mission 66 program. The program, which began in 1956, sought to improve facilities and address deteriorated conditions in the national parks that had resulted from delayed maintenance during World War II coupled with a massive visitor boom in the post-war years. Mission 66 projects began in 1956 and ended in 1966, the fiftieth anniversary of the National Park Service. Over \$1 billion was spent on infrastructure and other improvements in the parks during this time.

The pioneer museum exhibit added to the manor house in 1952 was removed during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Throughout the latter portion of the twentieth century, maintenance projects were undertaken throughout the park. In 1987, both Bass Lake and Trout Lake were drained, as the earthen dams did not meet federal safety standards. The dams were reconstructed in 1990.<sup>140</sup>

Just west of the U.S. Highway 221, the National Park Service developed a maintenance area beginning in the early 1980s that included office, maintenance, and storage buildings. The first structure constructed was the ranger station office building in 1980. In 1981, the ranger station vehicle storage building was constructed. A historic preservation workshop was built in 1994, adjacent to the vehicle storage building, while a pole shed was erected in 1998. In 2002, a small concrete building was moved to the site to store insecticides.

### Collections

The museum collections at Blue Ridge Parkway that came from the Moses Cone Estate include Moses and Bertha Cone's steamer trunks, and a pool table with billiard balls and cue rack, which were donated to the park by Bertha Cone's grandnieces, Judith Lindau McConnell and Nancy Lindau Lewis. These items are in the Blue Ridge Parkway museum collections storage facility and are cataloged.

An apple sprayer and carriage that belonged to the Cone family were purchased by the park from local sources. Both the apple sprayer and carriage are well documented as having belonged to Mrs. Cone. Architectural building fragments from Flat Top Manor, the carriage barn, and the apple barn have been accessioned into the collection. All items are in storage at the Flat Top Estate. Archeological objects from past research projects are located at National Park Service Southeast Archeological Center in Tallahassee, Florida.

Located in the park's archival collection in Asheville, North Carolina, the Moses H. Cone Papers is an accessioned and cataloged manuscript collection acquired by the Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital when ownership of the estate transferred to the National Park Service. The collection represents business records from the operation of the farm and orchard as well as some personal business records of Bertha Cone. These records document the daily activities of managing an apple orchard and farm. The records are dated 1898 through 1947 and total 23.5 linear feet.

A Historic Furnishings Report for Flat Top Manor was approved in 2012. The Historic Furnishings Report is the first formal study of the site-associated furnishings at the Flat Top Manor house. The report draws together from a variety of sources extensive information about the structure's historic occupants and interior furnishings, and identifies a significant number of Flat Top Manor's original furnishings.

In 1945, Bertha Cone created a detailed will that listed all of the furnishings in Flat Top Manor. She gave away her belongings at Flat Top Estate to members of her family, friends, and former estate staff. Some of the furnishings from the estate owned by the Lindau and Cone families have been documented in the Historic Furnishings Report.

The oral interviews of Bertha Cone's grandnieces, Judith McConnell and Nancy Lewis, contribute substantially to the understanding of Flat Top Manor's furnishings. Their firsthand accounts of life at the Estate in the 1930s and 1940s serve as the interpretive backbone of the third period of interpretation (1931-1947). These interviews, combined with Bertha's 1947 will, make the third interpretive period the most well-documented time period in the estate's history. Only four interior photographs of Flat Top Manor exist from the time it was occupied. The lack of interior photographs combined with the complete removal of all furnishings means there is very little visual information to rely upon when determining interior furnishings of the house.<sup>141</sup>

139. Firth, *Cultural Landscape Report*, 69.

140. *Ibid.*, 76.

141. Collections statement provided by Jackie Holt, Curator, NPS Blue Ridge Parkway, August 2012.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

- Andrews, Mildred Gwin. *The Men and the Mills: A History of the Southern Textile Industry*. Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1987.
- Bishir, Catherine W. *North Carolina Architecture*. Portable Edition. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press for the Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina, Inc., 2005.
- Bishir, Catherine W. "Orlo Epps." *North Carolina Architects and Builders: A Biographical Dictionary*. North Carolina State University Libraries and North Carolina State University Libraries Digital Scholarship and Publishing Center. October 30, 2009. <http://ncarchitects.lib.ncsu.edu/people/P000012>.
- Buxton, Barry M. *Historic Resource Study, Moses H. Cone Estate, Blue Ridge Parkway*. Atlanta, Georgia: National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office, 1987.
- Cone Export & Commission Company. *Half Century Book: 1891-1941*. Greensboro, North Carolina: The Company, 1941.
- Dilsaver, Lary M. *Cumberland Island National Seashore: A History of Conservation Conflict*. Charlottesville, Virginia: University of Virginia Press, 2004.
- Dolan, Susan A. *A Fruitful Legacy: A Historic Context of Fruit Trees and Orchards in the United States, from 1600 to the Present*. Draft Report prepared for the Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, Pacific West Regional Office – Cultural Resources, Park Historic Structures and Cultural Landscapes Program, National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, January 2007.
- Firth, Ian J. W. *The Blue Ridge Parkway National Historic Landmark Nomination*. Draft, 2005.
- . "Historic Significance of the Blue Ridge Parkway." Appalachian Cultural Resources Workshop Papers, National Park Service. June 5, 2009. [www.nps.gov/history/history/online\\_books/sero/appalachian/sec2.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/sero/appalachian/sec2.htm), accessed January 2011.
- . *Moses H. Cone Memorial Park: A Cultural Landscape Report*. Prepared for the Cultural Resources Planning Division, Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, August 1993.
- Hirschland, Ellen B., and Nancy H. Ramage. *The Cone Sisters of Baltimore: Collecting at Full Tilt*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2008.
- Ingham, John N. *Biographical Dictionary of American Business Leaders A-G*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1983.
- Hood, Davyd Foard Isinglass; Daniel Vivian, National Park Service, National Historic Landmarks Survey, ed. *Biltmore Estate National Historic Landmark Nomination (Additional Documentation and Boundary Reduction)*, additional documentation approved April 5, 2005.
- Jolley, Harley E. *The Blue Ridge Parkway*. Knoxville, Tennessee: University of Tennessee Press, 1969.
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2006.
- McNeil, Jessica, Archeologist, Southeast Archeological Center (SEAC). Memorandum to David W. Morgan, Director, SEAC, subject: *Trip Report on Geophysical and Archeological Investigations at Moses Cone Manor, Blue Ridge Parkway, Blowing Rock, North Carolina, August 8-12, 2011*, SEAC Acc. 2536, January 26, 2012.
- Meier, Lauren G., Historical Landscape Architect, Lee Terzis, Historian; revisions by Nancy J. Brown, Historical Landscape Architect. *National Register Nomination: Historic Resources of Acadia National Park Multiple Property Listing*. Brookline, Massachusetts: Olmsted Center for Landscape Preservation, June 2001, revised June 2005.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital to United States of America, Deed, January 21, 1949. Deed was officially recorded on January 13, 1950. Photocopy as recorded in Watauga County Courthouse.

Noberg Group. *The Moses H. Cone Manor House and Outbuildings Historic American Building Survey (HABS)*, 1987.

Noblitt, Philip T. *A Mansion in the Mountains: The Story of Moses and Bertha Cone and Their Blowing Rock Manor*. Boone, North Carolina: Parkway Publishers, Inc., 1996.

Phillips, Laura. *National Register Nomination, Flat Top Manor Estate*. Draft, January 2010.

Quin, Richard. *Blue Ridge Parkway. Historic American Engineering Record (HAER), Report No. NC-42*, 1997.

Sandler, Gilbert. *Jewish Baltimore: A Family Album*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000.

Specht, Neva J., Ph.D, Carrie A. Streeter, MA, and Joseph W. Otto, MA, Appalachian State University. *Historic Furnishings Report for Flat Top Manor, Moses H. Cone Memorial Park, Highlands District, Blue Ridge Parkway, Blowing Rock, and North Carolina*, undated.

Surber and Barber Architects, Inc. *Moses H. Cone Manor House: Historic Structure Report*. Prepared for the Southeast Regional Office, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, February 1996.

Whisnant, Anne Mitchell. *Super-scenic Motorway: A Blue Ridge Parkway History*. Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
☐ previously listed in the National Register  
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark  
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
☐ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

☐ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency  
☐ Local government  
☐ University  
☐ Other

Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 3,496 acres

(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	17	436133	4004463
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	17	436966	4004463
	Zone	Easting	Northing
3	17	439813	4002601
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	17	440245	4000036
	Zone	Easting	Northing
5	17	436710	3997620
	Zone	Easting	Northing
6	17	436375	3998095
	Zone	Easting	Northing
7	17	435735	3999890
	Zone	Easting	Northing
8	17	435735	4000578
	Zone	Easting	Northing
9	17	435364	4001878
	Zone	Easting	Northing
10	17	435364	4002289
	Zone	Easting	Northing
11	17	435364	4002711
	Zone	Easting	Northing

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundary of the nominated property is identified as Watauga County, North Carolina, Land Records Parcel 2808-53-0904-000, consisting of 3,496 acres. The boundary is shown on the accompanying property map. A concise legal description of the property is not available; the description of the property as provided in a deed from the Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital to the United States America (January 21, 1949), and a description of the land transfer with the City of Blowing Rock, North Carolina (2012), are provided on continuation sheets.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary of the nominated property includes the historic property associated with Flat Top Estate, including acreage acquired by Moses Cone between 1892 and 1899 and added to after his death by Bertha Cone in 1909 and 1910, less 20 acres transferred to the Town of Blowing Rock in 2012, giving a total estate acreage of 3,496. The acreage conveyed to the United States government in 1949 for the Moses H. Cone Memorial Park totaled 3,516 acres.

Flat Top Estate  
Name of Property

Watauga, North Carolina  
County and State

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Deborah Slaton, Liz Sargent, Kenneth Itle, Tim Penich, and Mike Ford

organization Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.

date July 8, 2013

street & number 330 Pfingsten Road

telephone (847) 272-7400

city or town Northbrook

State IL

zip code 60062

e-mail dslaton@wje.com

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

*Please see attached location map, maps of contributing and non-contributing features, and map of photo station points.*

### Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

*Please see enclosed prints of digital photographs and map of photo station points. Please see also archival photographs provided as part of Additional Documentation*

### Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name National Park Service

street & number 199 Hemphill Knob Road

telephone (828) 271-4779

city or town Asheville

State NC

zip code 28803

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

---

Additional Documentation

Page 59

Figure 1. The Cone family, August 1898. Front step, seated: Jeanette Siegel Cone, wife of Ceasar Cone; Seated on porch, left to right: Ceasar Cone with his son, Herman; Sydney Cone, brother of Ceasar and Moses; Mr. Key of Baltimore; in chair: Helen Guggenheimer Cone, mother of Moses and Ceaser; standing: Claribel Cone, sister of Ceasar and Moses. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 2. Moses and Bertha Cone, circa 1899–1908. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 3. Proximity Cotton Mills in Greensboro, North Carolina, circa 1900. Photographer unknown; image courtesy of Blowing Rock Historical Society.

Figure 4. Moses Cone (left), 1906. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 5. View northeast toward Flat Top Manor, shortly after completion, circa 1900. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 6. Postcard of the entrance to Flat Top Manor Estate from the Yonahlossee Turnpike, circa 1900. At the time the photograph was taken, the gate was not yet installed. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 7. Distant view looking northwest of Flat Top Manor with hydrangea plantings in middle ground, circa 1900–1908. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 8. View of hydrangea plantings near Bass Lake, circa 1900–1908. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 9. View across Bass Lake toward the Cone Cemetery site, possibly from the Yonahlossee Turnpike, looking northeast, circa 1900–1908. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 10. View of Bass Lake looking north circa 1900–1908, with the boathouse visible on the left and the apple barn and stone bridge crossing of the dam spillway in the center. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 11. View southeast of Bass Lake from the entrance road, with the double arched bridge in the center of the view, circa 1900–1908. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 12. View of Bass Lake toward the northwest, with Flat Top Manor in the distance, circa 1900–1908. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 13. View north across Bass Lake, likely from Duncan Road, circa 1900–1908. The boathouse is visible along the lakeshore at the center right. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 14. Postcard of Flat Top Estate, view southeast across Bass Lake, circa 1907–1915. Photographer: E. Q. Krupp Company; image courtesy of Blowing Rock Historical Society.

Figure 15. Postcard of Flat Top Manor, view looking northeast, 1914–1915. Photographer: Brown Book Company; image courtesy of Blowing Rock Historical Society.

Figure 16. Construction of the May View Drive overpass structure at U.S. 221, September 1938. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate

Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 60

Figure 17. Postcard of Bass Lake and boathouse, view looking north, circa 1940. Photographer: Asheville Post Card Company; image courtesy of Blowing Rock Historical Society.

Figure 18. Flat Top Estate laundry house and servants' quarters (now demolished), July 1947. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 19. View of the horse stables at Flat Top Estate (now demolished), September 1948. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 20. Wood observation tower (now demolished) on Flat Top Mountain, with Ben Cone in foreground, circa 1948. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Figure 21. Wood observation tower (now demolished) on Flat Top Mountain, September 1948. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

Map 1. Location maps showing the Blue Ridge Parkway and Flat Top Estate (now Moses H. Cone Memorial Park). Source: John Milner Associates, Inc., 2012; adapted from Historic American Building Survey documentation for the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Map 2. Overall site plan of the north section of Flat Top Estate (now known as Moses H. Cone Memorial Park). Source: John Milner Associates, Inc., 2012; adapted from GIS information and aerial photography received from NPS Southeast Region and historic maps from Blue Ridge Parkway Archives.

Map 3. Overall site plan of the south section of Flat Top Estate (now known as Moses H. Cone Memorial Park). Source: John Milner Associates, Inc., 2012; adapted from GIS information and aerial photography received from NPS Southeast Region and historic maps from Blue Ridge Parkway Archives.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 61



Figure 1. The Cone family, August 1898. Front step, seated: Jeanette Siegel Cone, wife of Ceasar Cone; Seated on porch, left to right: Ceasar Cone with his son, Herman; Sydney Cone, brother of Ceasar and Moses; Mr. Key of Baltimore; in chair: Helen Guggenheimer Cone, mother of Moses and Ceaser; standing: Claribel Cone, sister of Ceasar and Moses. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 62



Figure 2. Moses and Bertha Cone, circa 1899–1908. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 63

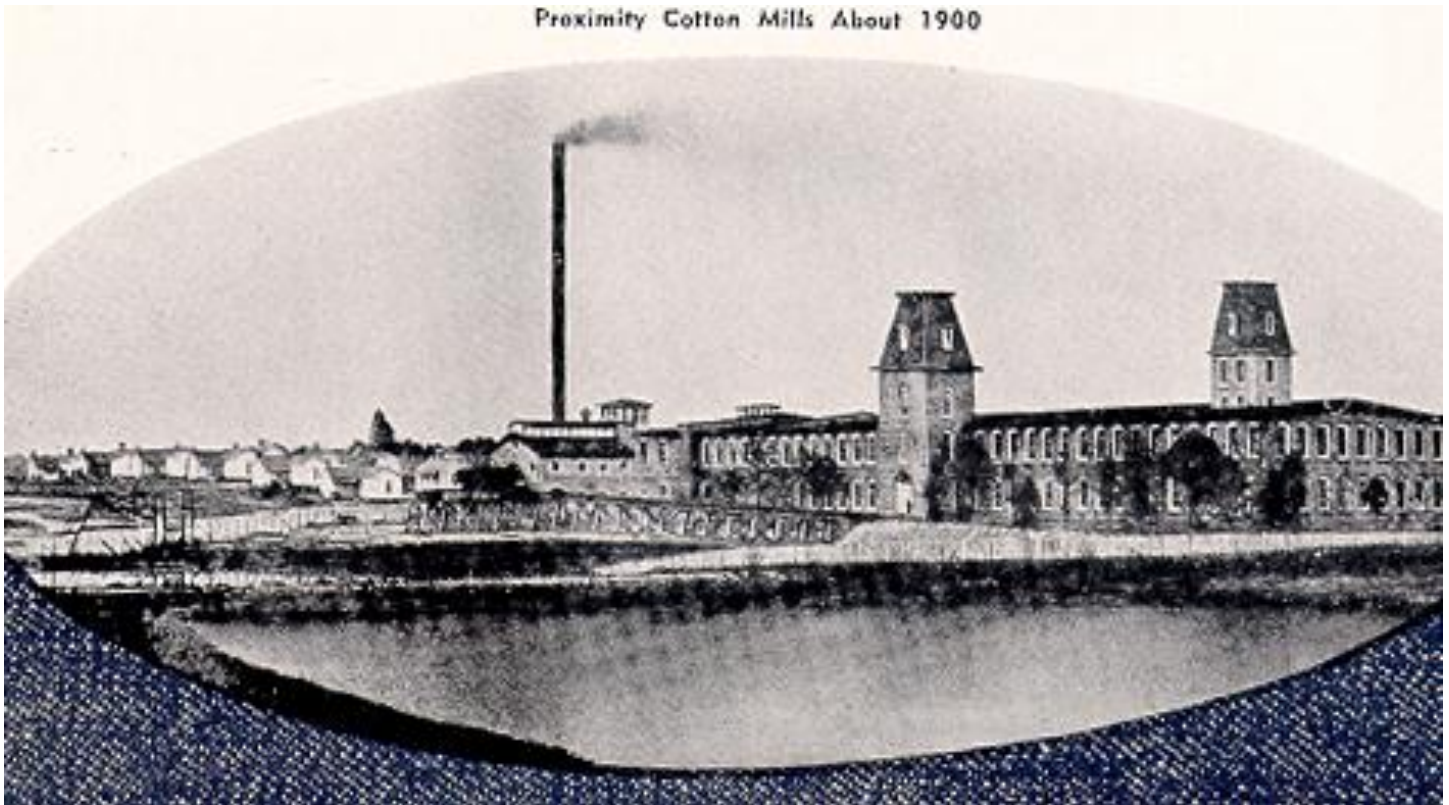


Figure 3. Proximity Cotton Mills in Greensboro, North Carolina, circa 1900. Photographer unknown; image courtesy of Blowing Rock Historical Society.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 64

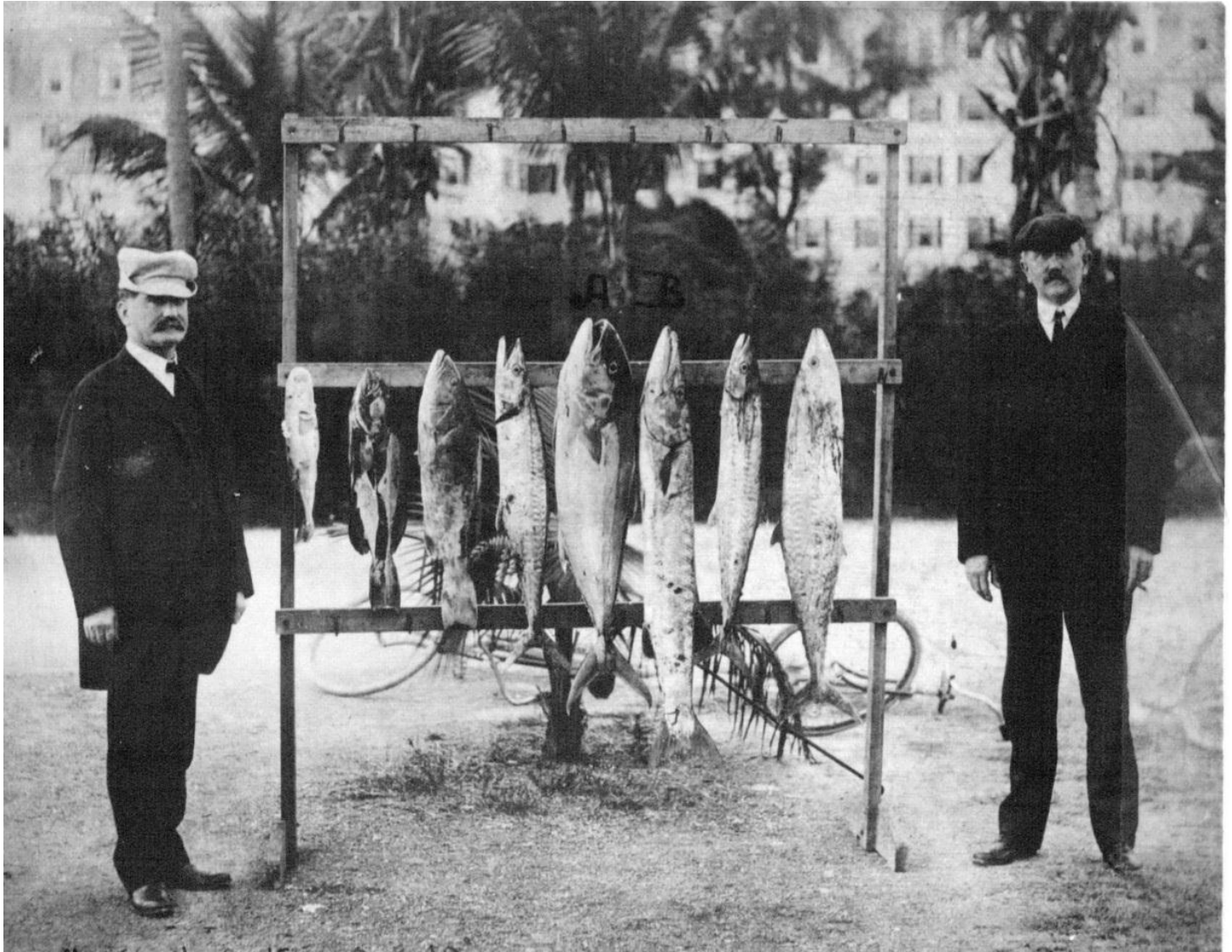


Figure 4. Moses Cone (left), 1906. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 65



Figure 5. View northeast toward Flat Top Manor, shortly after completion, circa 1900. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 66



Figure 6. Postcard of the entrance to Flat Top Manor Estate from the Yonahlossee Turnpike, circa 1900. At the time the photograph was taken, the gate was not yet installed. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 67



Figure 7. Distant view looking northwest of Flat Top Manor with hydrangea plantings in middle ground, circa 1900–1908. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 68



Figure 8. View of hydrangea plantings near Bass Lake, circa 1900–1908. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 69



Figure 9. View across Bass Lake toward the Cone Cemetery site, possibly from the Yonahlossee Turnpike, looking northeast, circa 1900–1908. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 70



Figure 10. View of Bass Lake looking north circa 1900–1908, with the boathouse visible on the left and the apple barn and stone bridge crossing of the dam spillway in the center. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 71



Figure 11. View southeast of Bass Lake from the entrance road, with the double arched bridge in the center of the view, circa 1900–1908. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 72



Figure 12. View of Bass Lake toward the northwest, with Flat Top Manor in the distance, circa 1900–1908. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 73



Figure 13. View north across Bass Lake, likely from Duncan Road, circa 1900–1908. The boathouse is visible along the lakeshore at the center right. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 74

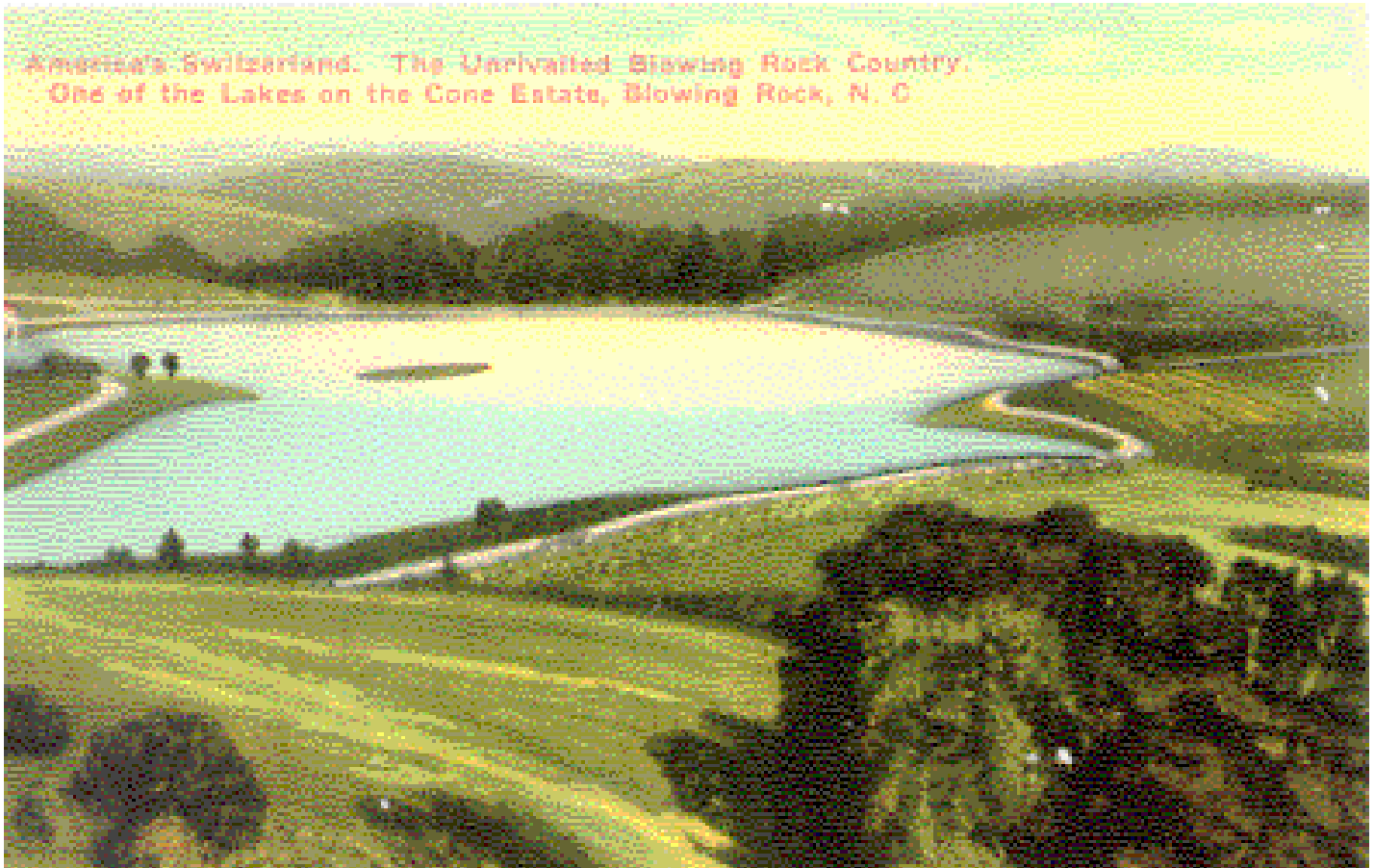


Figure 14. Postcard of Flat Top Estate, view southeast across Bass Lake, circa 1907–1915. Photographer: E. Q. Krupp Company; image courtesy of Blowing Rock Historical Society.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 75

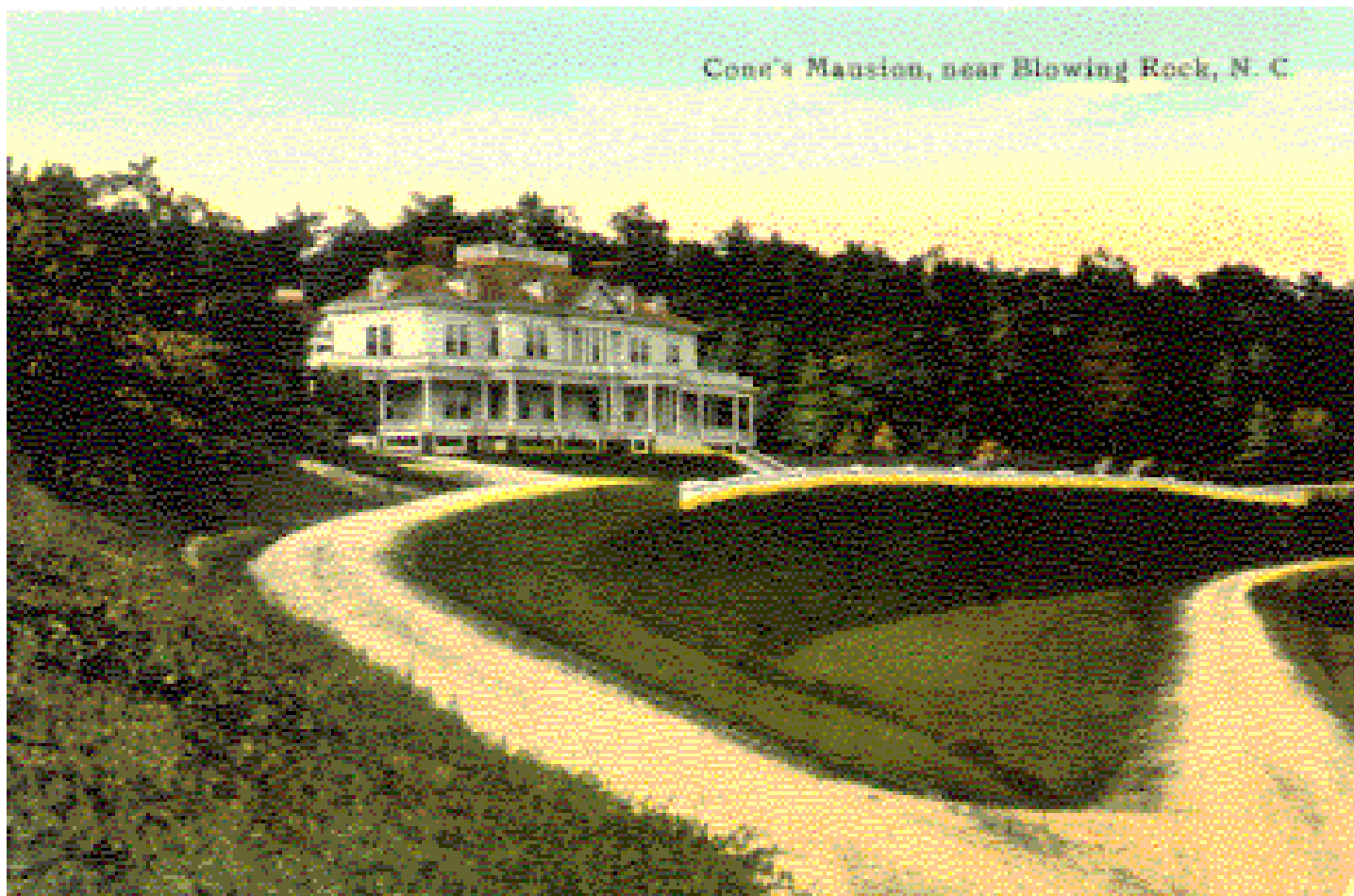


Figure 15. Postcard of Flat Top Manor, view looking northeast, 1914–1915. Photographer: Brown Book Company; image courtesy of Blowing Rock Historical Society.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 76



Figure 16. Construction of the May View Drive overpass structure at U.S. 221, September 1938. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 77



Figure 17. Postcard of Bass Lake and boathouse, view looking north, circa 1940. Photographer: Asheville Post Card Company; image courtesy of Blowing Rock Historical Society.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 78



Figure 18. Flat Top Estate laundry house and servants' quarters (now demolished), July 1947. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 79



Figure 19. View of the horse stables at Flat Top Estate (now demolished), September 1948. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 80



Figure 20. Wood observation tower (now demolished) on Flat Top Mountain, with Ben Cone in foreground, circa 1948. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Additional Documentation

Page 81



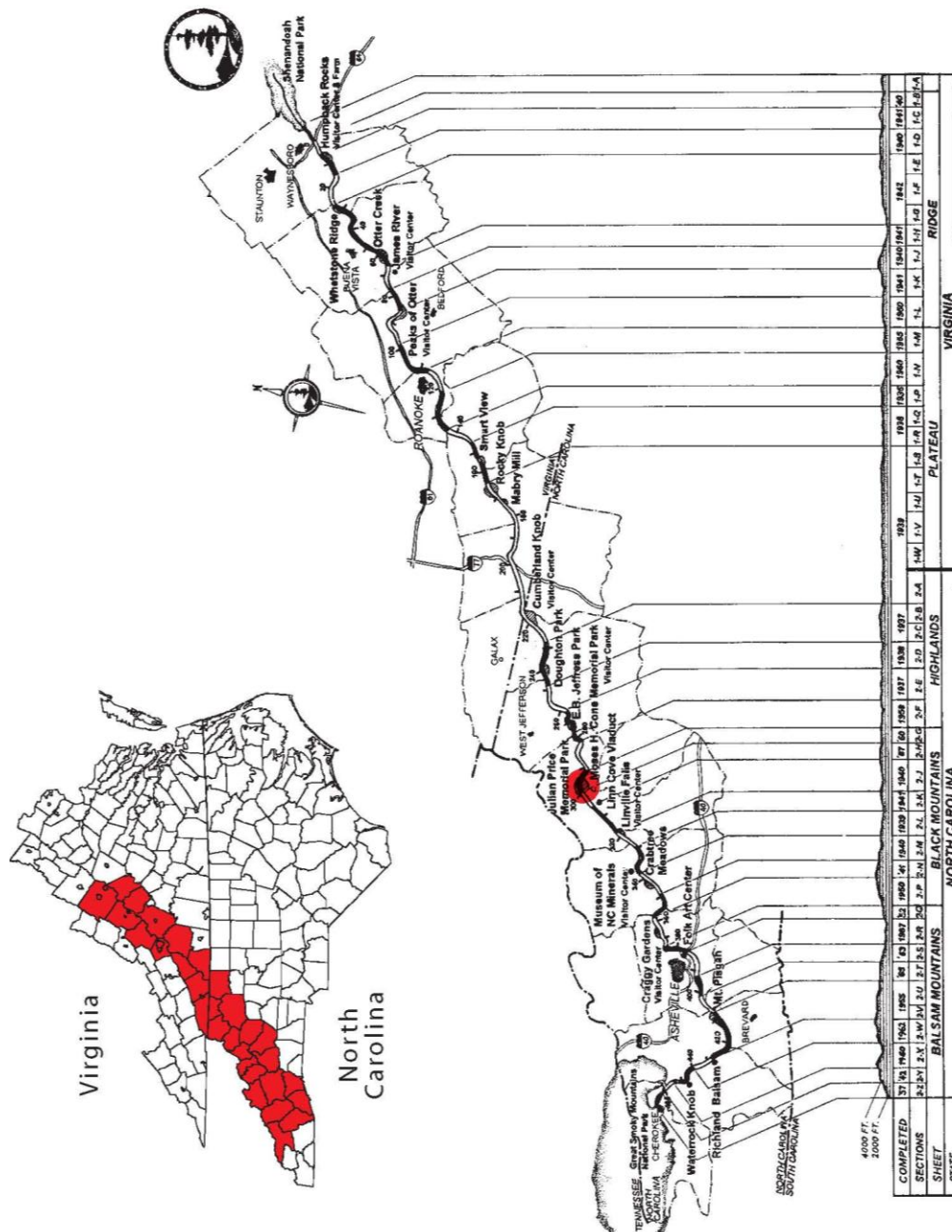
Figure 21. Wood observation tower (now demolished) on Flat Top Mountain, September 1948. Photographer unknown; photograph courtesy of National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

## Additional Documentation

Page 82



Map 1. Location maps showing the Blue Ridge Parkway and Flat Top Estate (now Moses H. Cone Memorial Park). Source: John Milner Associates, Inc., 2012; adapted from maps provided by NPS Blue Ridge Parkway.

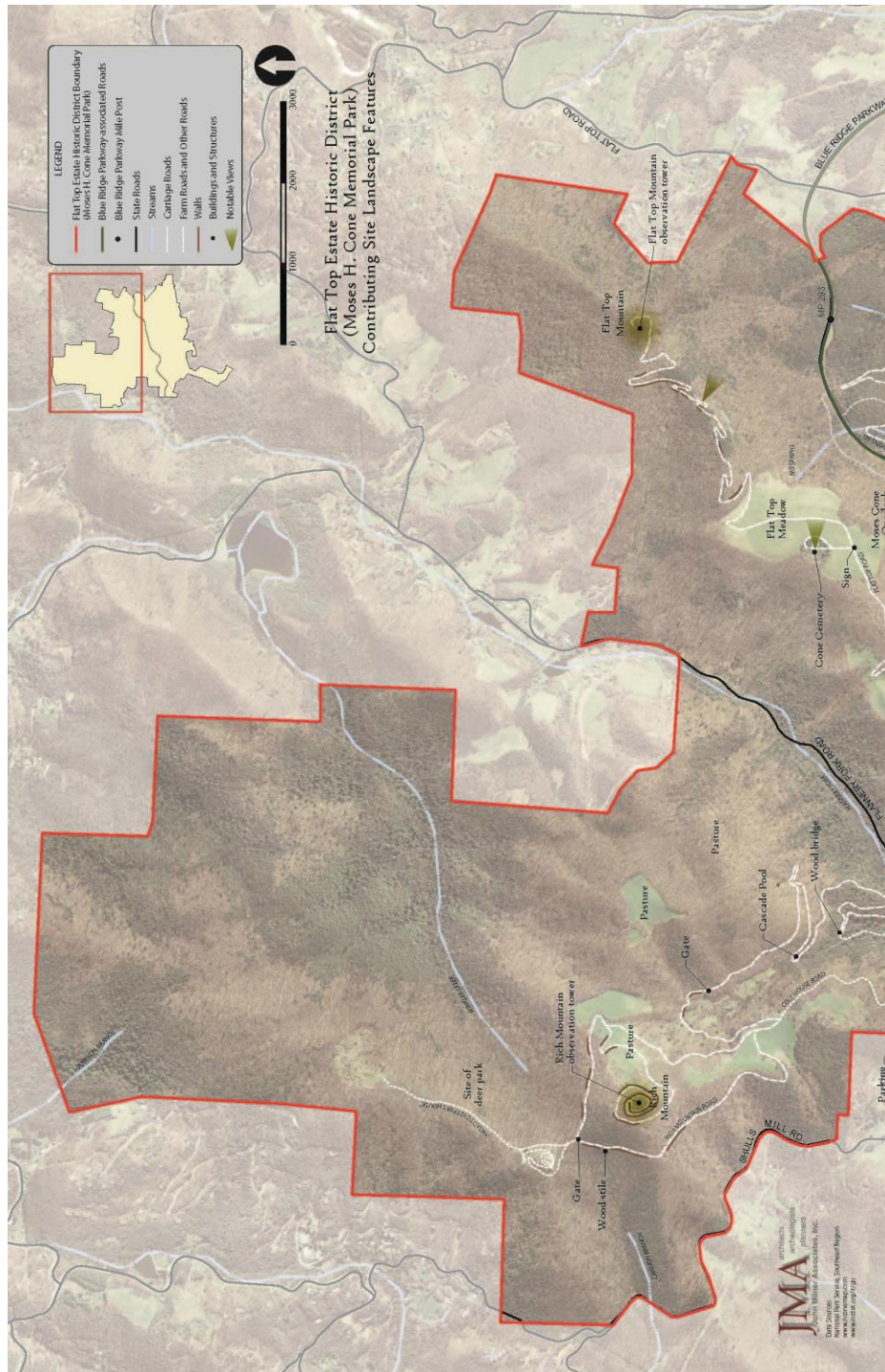


## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

## Additional Documentation

Page 83



Map 2. Overall site plan of the north section of Flat Top Estate (now Moses H. Cone Memorial Park). Source: John Milner Associates, Inc., 2012; adapted from GIS information and aerial photography received from NPS Southeast Region and historic maps from Blue Ridge Parkway Archives.

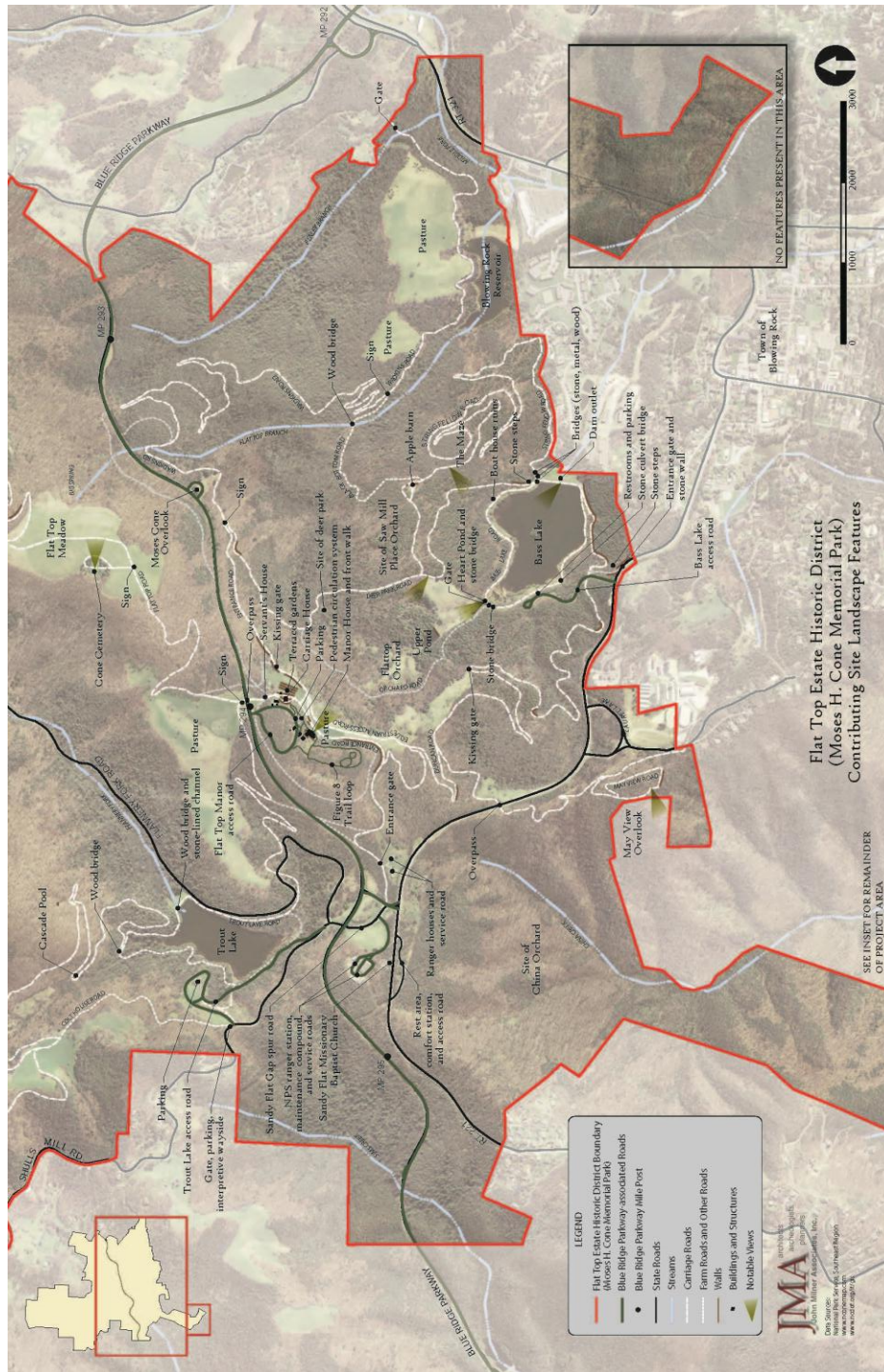


## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

## Additional Documentation

Page 84



Map 3. Overall site plan of the south section of Flat Top Estate (now Moses H. Cone Memorial Park). Source: John Milner Associates, Inc., 2012; adapted from GIS information and aerial photography received from NPS Southeast Region and historic maps from Blue Ridge Parkway Archives.

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Photographs – Continuation Page

Page 85

### National Register Nomination Photograph Log

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

#### Photo 1

View of Flat Top Manor from Deer Park Road, camera facing northwest.

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

#### Photo 2

The entrance gate on the Entrance Road at Sandy Flat Gap, camera facing northeast.

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

#### Photo 3

An example of the culvert system on the carriage drives, camera facing east.

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

#### Photo 4

The Esplanade on the Entrance Road, looking toward Flat Top Manor, camera facing northeast.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Photographs – Continuation Page

Page 86

---

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 5

A view from the manor house looking southeast toward Bass Lake, camera facing southeast.

---

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 330 Pfingsten Road, Northbrook, Illinois 60062

Photo 6

A view of Flat Top Manor from the east, camera facing west.

---

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 330 Pfingsten Road, Northbrook, Illinois 60062

Photo 7

A view of Flat Top Manor from the south, camera facing north.

---

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 330 Pfingsten Road, Northbrook, Illinois 60062

Photo 8

View of Flat Top Manor from the northeast, camera facing southwest.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Photographs – Continuation Page

Page 87

---

Name of Property:	Flat Top Estate
City or Vicinity:	Blowing Rock
County:	Watauga
State:	North Carolina
Photographer:	Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.
Date Photographed:	October 2010
Location of original digital files:	330 Pfingsten Road, Northbrook, Illinois 60062

Photo 9

View of Flat Top Manor from the southwest, camera facing northeast.

---

Name of Property:	Flat Top Estate
City or Vicinity:	Blowing Rock
County:	Watauga
State:	North Carolina
Photographer:	Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.
Date Photographed:	October 2010
Location of original digital files:	330 Pfingsten Road, Northbrook, Illinois 60062

Photo 10

View of Flat Top Manor from the northwest, camera facing southeast.

---

Name of Property:	Flat Top Estate
City or Vicinity:	Blowing Rock
County:	Watauga
State:	North Carolina
Photographer:	Laura Phillips
Date Photographed:	June 2009
Location of original digital files:	199 Hemphill Knob Road, Asheville, North Carolina 28803

Photo 11

The dining room, at Flat Top Manor (Room 118), camera facing west.

---

Name of Property:	Flat Top Estate
City or Vicinity:	Blowing Rock
County:	Watauga
State:	North Carolina
Photographer:	Laura Phillips
Date Photographed:	June 2009
Location of original digital files:	199 Hemphill Knob Road, Asheville, North Carolina 28803

Photo 12

The kitchen at Flat Top Manor (Room 114), camera facing east.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Photographs – Continuation Page

Page 88

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 330 Pfingsten Road, Northbrook, Illinois 60062

Photo 13

View of the carriage house from the southwest, camera facing northeast.

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 14

View of a terraced garden wall east of the carriage house, camera facing northwest.

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 15

The Blue Ridge Parkway bridge over the carriage drive at mile post 294, camera facing northwest.

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 16

A view of the Cone Cemetery, camera facing northwest.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Photographs – Continuation Page

Page 89

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 17

View from the Cone Cemetery, camera facing east.

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 18

A view across Flat Top Meadow, camera facing west.

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 19

The observation tower atop Flat Top Mountain, camera facing north.

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 20

View of the Cascade Pool, camera facing northeast.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Photographs – Continuation Page

Page 90

---

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 21  
The Rich Mountain viewing platform, camera facing west.

---

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 22  
View from the top of Rich Mountain, camera facing northwest.

---

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 330 Pfingsten Road, Northbrook, Illinois 60062

Photo 23  
View of the Sandy Flat School/Church from the east, camera facing west.

---

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 24  
The rock walls along Deer Park Road, camera facing southwest.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Photographs – Continuation Page

Page 91

---

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 25

A view of Bass Lake, camera facing north.

---

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 26

View of Bass Lake Road, camera facing northwest.

---

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 27

The stone bridge over the spillway near the intersection of Deer Park and Stringfellow roads, camera facing north.

---

Name of Property: Flat Top Estate  
City or Vicinity: Blowing Rock  
County: Watauga  
State: North Carolina  
Photographer: John Milner Associates, Inc.  
Date Photographed: October 2010  
Location of original digital files: 300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 28

A view of the heart shaped pools northwest of Bass Lake, camera facing north.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Photographs – Continuation Page

Page 92

---

Name of Property:	Flat Top Estate
City or Vicinity:	Blowing Rock
County:	Watauga
State:	North Carolina
Photographer:	John Milner Associates, Inc.
Date Photographed:	October 2010
Location of original digital files:	300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 29

View of Flat Top Manor from the heart shaped pools, camera facing northwest.

---

Name of Property:	Flat Top Estate
City or Vicinity:	Blowing Rock
County:	Watauga
State:	North Carolina
Photographer:	John Milner Associates, Inc.
Date Photographed:	October 2010
Location of original digital files:	300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 30

View of the Entrance Road; Bass Lake can be seen on the right, while the stacked stone breast wall is visible on the left, camera facing southwest.

---

Name of Property:	Flat Top Estate
City or Vicinity:	Blowing Rock
County:	Watauga
State:	North Carolina
Photographer:	John Milner Associates, Inc.
Date Photographed:	October 2010
Location of original digital files:	300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 31

A view down Stringfellow Road, camera facing northeast.

---

Name of Property:	Flat Top Estate
City or Vicinity:	Blowing Rock
County:	Watauga
State:	North Carolina
Photographer:	John Milner Associates, Inc.
Date Photographed:	October 2010
Location of original digital files:	300 West Main Street, Suite 201, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Photo 32

View of the rock walls at the apple barn, camera facing northwest.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Photographs – Continuation Page

Page 93

Name of Property:	Flat Top Estate
City or Vicinity:	Blowing Rock
County:	Watauga
State:	North Carolina
Photographer:	Wiss, Janney, Elstner Associates, Inc.
Date Photographed:	October 2010
Location of original digital files:	330 Pfingsten Road, Northbrook, Illinois 60062

Photo 33

View of the west elevation of the apple barn; the ell addition can be seen on the right, camera facing east.

Photo Station Point Maps

Map 4. Overall site plan of the north section of Flat Top Estate (now Moses H. Cone Memorial Park), showing location of photographs. Source: John Milner Associates, Inc., 2012; adapted from GIS information and aerial photography received from NPS Southeast Region and historic maps from Blue Ridge Parkway Archives.

Map 5. Overall site plan of the south section of Flat Top Estate (now Moses H. Cone Memorial Park), showing location of photograph. Source: John Milner Associates, Inc., 2012; adapted from GIS information and aerial photography received from NPS Southeast Region and historic maps from Blue Ridge Parkway Archives.



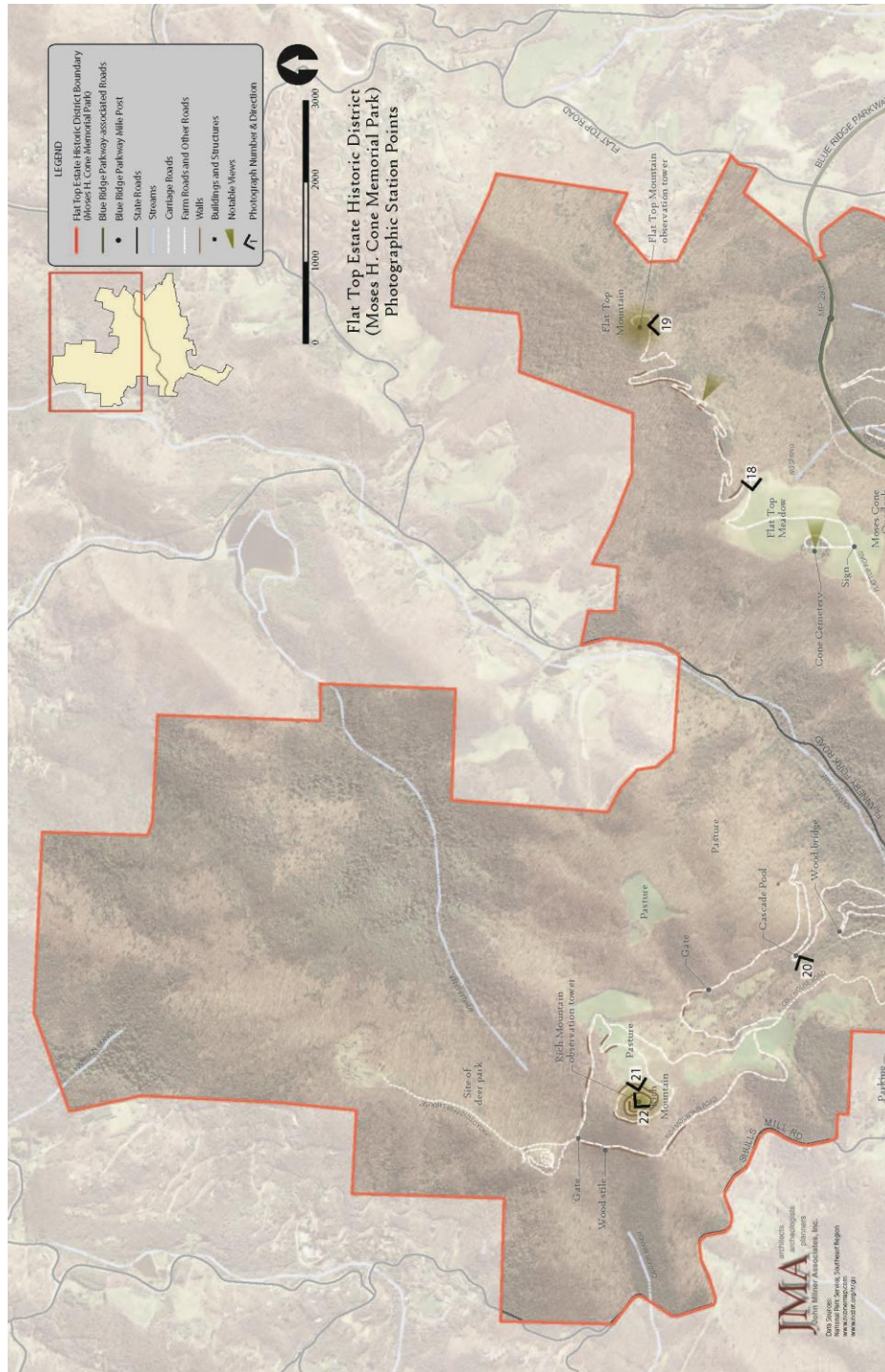
National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate

Watauga, North Carolina

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 94



Map 4. Overall site plan of the north section of Flat Top Estate (now Moses H. Cone Memorial Park), showing locations of photographs. Source: John Milner Associates, Inc., 2012; adapted from GIS information and aerial photography received from NPS Southeast Region and historic maps from Blue Ridge Parkway Archives.

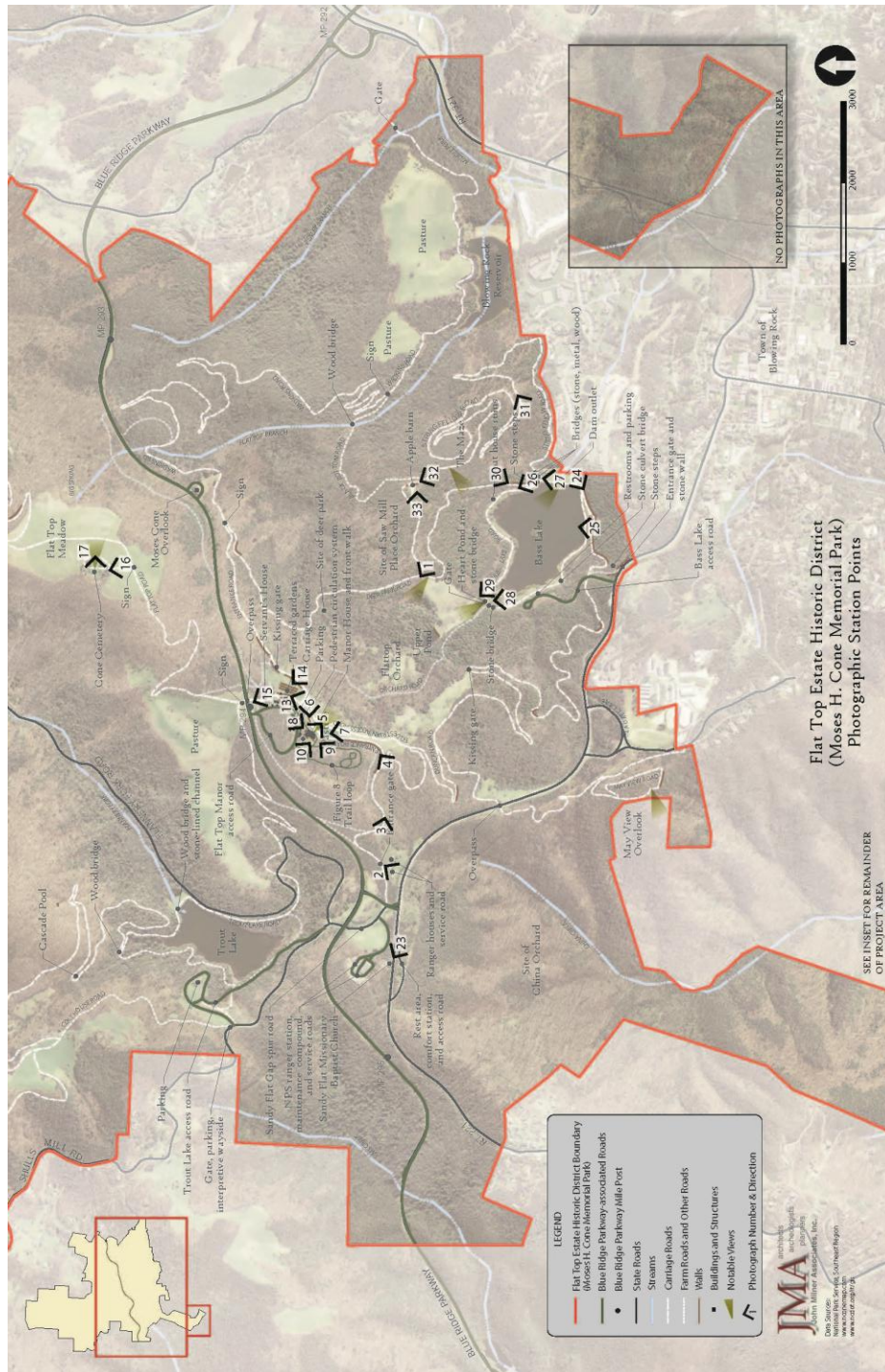
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate

Watauga, North Carolina

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 95



Map 5. Overall site plan of the south section of Flat Top Estate (now Moses H. Cone Memorial Park), showing locations of photographs. Source: John Milner Associates, Inc., 2012; adapted from GIS information and aerial photography received from NPS Southeast Region and historic maps from Blue Ridge Parkway Archives.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 96

Moses H. Cone Memorial Park Property  
Watauga County, North Carolina  
Blue Ridge Parkway 14X1013, .001, Parkways  
National Park Service

Submitted by Wade E. Brown, Attorney at Law, Boone, North Carolina.

Wade E. Brown, an attorney of Boone, North Carolina, submits the abstract of title for the Moses H. Cone Memorial Park Property located (principally) in Blowing Rock Township, Watauga County, North Carolina, in accordance with contract between the Blue Ridge Parkway and said attorney under date of September 27, 1949.

This abstract is intended to cover the property described in a deed from the MOSES H. CONE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL to the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA under date of January 21, 1949 (not recorded), consisting of four tracts as described in said deed. Since the abstracter has a photostatic copy of said deed, it is assumed that copies are available and the contents of said deed will not be repeated in this report.

In setting out the various tracts the abstracter used as a guide a map or plat of said property prepared by W.G. Potter, Civil Engineer, of Greensboro, North Carolina, dated in 1909. We are advised that the Park Service has copies of this plat and for convenience the separate tracts will be referred to under the same heading as designated in the plat.

Since all of the property described in the deed above referred to from the MOSES H. CONE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL to the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA is contained in a deed from Bertha L. Cone to the Moses H. Cone Memorial Hospital dated May 30, 1911, and recorded in Book 11, Page 517, we will not attempt to set out in detail this transaction on each of the separate tracts after the first tract. Also the deed immediately preceding this deed is a deed from Caesar Cone, et al, to Mrs. Bertha L. Cone, dated January 27, 1910, and covers the entire tract designated in the deed to the United States of America as tract number one. We will refer to this deed in detail only in the abstract to the first tract.

It is pointed out that a number of the tracts are traced back to the grants, but a number of other tracts are traced back only to approximately 1873 at which time the Watauga County Courthouse was destroyed by fire, and the records were lost. Occasionally deeds are found prior to this date which were either recorded later or in a few instances it is found that deeds that had been recorded prior to the fire were re-recorded. Watauga County was established as a county in 1849. In some instances the beginning entries were later than 1873, and it is assumed that in these cases the grantors were the holders of the title since before the courthouse burned. It will also be noted that affidavits as to heirs, marital status, etc., are not submitted, in that this case is very different from most boundaries, because for all practical purposes all but the second, third and fourth small tracts have not changed hands since the property was purchased by Mr. Cone in the approximate period of about 1893 to 1905, and it has been extremely difficult to find anyone familiar with the property or with the family status of the various parties to the transactions prior to approximately 50 years or more ago. The present superintendent of the property has rendered valuable assistance in giving general information regarding the grantors in the various transactions, and it is apparent that he knows more than anyone else regarding the property since he has been superintendent and connected with the property since about 1908. He advises me that he does not know of anyone who is now living who would have an actual knowledge of the various pieces of property and the parties involved prior to the time Mr. Cone purchased the various tracts.

It is pointed out that under the statute of limitations of North Carolina, all possible claims are barred. Our statutes provide that adverse possession against the state for 30 years bars right of action; adverse possession under color of title against state is barred in 21 years; adverse possession under color of title against individuals is barred 7 years and possession against individuals without color of title is barred in 20 years. See North Carolina General Statutes, section 1-3521-43. Even assuming in case of individuals that someone with interest under disability could come in after the disability was removed, the time would still be ample to bar any rights which they might have had. In view of this situation, it is my opinion that no right of action could possibly be maintained either by the State or by any individual against any of the property herein abstracted.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

---

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 97

With this explanation we will proceed to give the history of the various transactions that we have been able to find from the records.

---

TAX STATUS

We find this property listed for taxes to Watauga County in the name of Mrs. Moses H. Cone, and all taxes are paid through 1947.

For 1948 tax is not paid in sum of	\$1516.10	
Penalty		75.80
Cost		.80
For 1949 tax not paid	<u>1516.10</u>	
Total tax due	\$3108.80	

---

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 98

HISTORY OF TITLE AND INDEX  
MOSES H. CONE PROPERTY  
BLOWING ROCK TOWNSHIP  
WATAUGA COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA  
WADE F. BROWN, ATTORNEY AT LAW, BOONE, N. C.  
ABSTRACTER

1. MALTBA TRACT

- (a) We begin our abstract for the title of the property described in the deed from MOSES H. CONE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, INC. to the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, dated January 21, 1949 (not recorded) for the Maltba tract by a deed from William A. Lenoir to Joseph C. Norwood, dated January 11, 1850, and recorded in Book S, Page 470. The description in this deed and in the subsequent deeds of this tract of land do not correspond in detail; however, there are enough calls which correspond to indicate that it is the same boundary of land, and we have been unable to find any other deeds by the various parties in connection with this tract that have any indication of covering the captioned tract.
- (b) The next is a deed from Joseph C. Norwood, et ux, to Noah Winkler dated March 31, 1875, and recorded in Book K, Page 10.
- (c) The next is a deed from Noah Winkler, et ux, to R.W. Maltba dated March 30, 1891, and recorded in Book O, Page 293. As stated above, notwithstanding the fact that this deed only calls for 50 acres, whereas the captioned property calls for 100 plus acres, we are unable to find any other deed of conveyance to R. W. Maltba that seems to have any connection with the captioned property.
- (d) The next is a deed from R.W. Maltba, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated August 23, 1897 and recorded in Book T, Page 296.
- (e) The next is a deed from Caesar Cone, et al, to Mrs. Bertha L. Cone dated January 27, 1910, and recorded in Book 11, Page 506. This deed covers the entire first tract as designated in the deed from MOSES H. CONE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, INC. to the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA referred to in paragraph one. The various grantors in this conveyance constituted the brothers and sisters of the late Moses H. Cone and as such, together with their wives, constituted his sole and only heirs at law. They were conveying their interests to the widow of Moses H. Cone, to wit, Mrs. Bertha L. Cone, the grantee in said instrument.
- (f) The next and final link is a deed from Bertha L. Cone to the MOSES H. CONE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, INC. to the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA referred to in paragraph one. The abstracter points out that there are various restrictions, reservations, etc. in this deed, but since there is a suit pending before the Supreme Court of North Carolina to clarify the various provisions, as well as the provisions being set out in the deed to the United States of America, no attempt is made to pass on the various points involved in this respect.

2. NOOE TRACT #1

- (a) We begin our abstract for the first tract of the R. E. Nooe, et al, to Moses H. Cone deed by a grant from the State of North Carolina to Enoch Reece dated December 17, 1824, and recorded in Book F, Page 409.
- (b) The next is a deed from Enoch Reece to Moajah Freeman dated January 1, 1829, and recorded in Book D, Page 106.
- (c) The next is a deed from Moajah Freeman to Colbert Blair dated November 6, 1833, and recorded in Book D, Page 108.
- (d) The next is a deed from Colbert Blair to Lot Estes dated April 14, 1843, and recorded in Book D, Page 107.
- (e) The next is a deed from Lot Estes, et ux, to H. R. Estes dated February 9, 1880, and recorded in Book K, Page 59. We are unable to find any record of H. R. Estes as grantor for this tract; however, we pick it up again in the deed from Abram Sudderth to Myra Vannoy as shown under paragraph (i) of third tract immediately below.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 99

NOOE TRACT #2

(f) We begin our abstract for the second tract of the R. E. Nooe, et al, to Moses H. Cone by a grant to Abram Sudderth dated February 28, 1843, and recorded in Book F, page 408. This tract covers a part of tract two.

(g) For the remainder of said second tract, we have a grant to Abram Sudderth dated February 28, 1843, and recorded in Book K, Page 144.

NOOE TRACT #3

(h) We begin our abstract for the third tract of the R. E. Nooe, et al, to Moses H. Cone by a grant to Abram Sudderth dated February 28, 1843, and recorded in Book F, Page 407.

(i) The next is a deed from Abram Sudderth to Myra Vannoy dated October 8, 1850, and recorded in Book F, Page 410. This deed contains the three tracts contained in the Nooe, et al, deed to Moses H. Cone. At this point we have a missing link. The deed described in the next paragraph indicates that there was a special proceedings in Wilkes County whereby R. E. Nooe, Commissioner, purports to have authority by reason of a judgment to make the deed to Moses H. Cone. The records of Wilkes County were searched and on the index of the special proceedings docket there was a heading as described in the deed, but upon looking on the page and book designated as Book D, Page 204, it was found that the page was blank so far as this proceedings was concerned. The following notation appeared on the index page opposite the heading of the proceedings "paid". The files were searched for the original papers in the case, but there was no jacket or other papers pertaining to the case that could be found.

(j) The next is a deed from R.E. Nooe, Commissioner, to Moses H. Cone dated January 31, 1898, and recorded in Book T, Page 548. This places the title to all three tracts in the name of Moses H. Cone. See notation under first tract history.

3. "A" TRACT

(a) We begin our abstract for the small tract designated as "A" on the plat by a grant to Caesar Cone dated April 15, 1910, and recorded in Book 14, Page 3. Since Caesar Cone, along with the other heirs, executed a deed to Bertha L. Cone as described under the history of the first tract, there are no other conveyances affecting this property.

"B" TRACT

(a) We begin our abstract for the small tract designated as "B" on the plat by a grant to Caesar Cone dated April 15, 1910, and recorded in Book 14, Page 1. This tract is also included in the description of the deed from Caesar Cone, et al, to Bertha L. Cone.

4. E.J. GREENE TRACT

(a) We begin our abstract for the tract by a grant to James Mays dated May 15, 1851, and recorded in Book D, Page 110.

(b) The next is a deed from James Mays to Eli Hartley dated March 14, 1854, and recorded in Book D, Page 118

(c) The next is a deed from Eli Hartley to John E. Greens dated February 10, 1874, and recorded in Book D, Page 113.

(d) The next is a deed from John E. Greene to E. J. Greene dated 15 January, 1907, and recorded in Book 7, Page 386.

(e) The next is a deed from H.J. Greene, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated October 17, 1908, and recorded in Book 9, Page 228. This places the title to this tract in the name of Moses H. Cone.

5. NORWOOD TRACT

(a) We begin our abstract for the Norwood tract by a deed from William A. Lenoir to Joseph C. Norwood dated January 11, 1858, and recorded in Book S, Page 470. (See Tract 1. (a)

(b) The next is a deed from Joseph C. Norwood, et ux, to Edward W. Fawcett and George Linn Barnhardt for tract #1, dated October 8, 1881, and recorded in Book A, Page 304. We find no record of Joseph C. Norwood as grantee.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 100

- (c) The next is a deed from Joseph C. Norwood to Edward W. Fawcett, George Linn Barnhardt and John W. Barnhardt for tract #2 dated November 9, 1881, and recorded in Book I, Page 450.
- (d) The next is a deed from Joseph C. Norwood, et ux, to Edward W. Fawcett, George Linn Barnhardt and John M. Barnhardt dated July 28, 1885, and recorded in Book K, Page 516. The description in this deed covers tract #3 in the deed from Fawcett to Cone recorded in Book R, Page 131. This places the title to all three tracts in Fawcett and Barnhardt.
- (e) We next have a deed from Edward W. Fawcett, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated August 22, 1893, and recorded in Book R, Page 131, for the 1/2 interest of said Fawcett. This places the title to the Norwood tract in the name of Moses H. Cone.
- (f) Although the description of the above chain of deeds appears to cover the Norwood tract, we now trace a tract which we have been unable to find elsewhere on the plat, and our information is that it covers some parts of the Norwood tract which it is assumed was not covered by the above deeds. We begin this chain by a grant to William Coffey dated January 24, 1842, and recorded in Book H, Page 291.
- (g) We find no record of William Coffey as grantor and the next link is a deed of trust from Nellie Pritchard to J. R. Clarke, et al, dated January 14, 1892, and recorded in Book C, Page 558. The description in this deed of trust and in the following deed refers to the grant set out in the paragraph immediately above, but no connecting links have been found; neither were we able to find a deed from Robert Greene to Lawson Story as called for in the deed of trust and the deed to Cone described in the next paragraph.
- (h) We next have a deed from G. L. Barnhardt, et al, to Moses H. Cone dated March 21, 1896, and recorded in Book S, Page 467.
- (i) The next is a deed from this same tract of land by G. W. F. Harper, et al, to Moses H. Cone dated September 6, 1897, and recorded in Book T, Page 303.

6. MACK GREENE TRACT

- (a) (Tract #1) The first recorded evidence of the McD Greene tract is a deed from Eli Hartley to John E. Greene dated February 10, 1874, and recorded in Book D, Page 113.
- (b) The next is a deed from John E. Greene, et ux, to McD Greene which covers the first tract of the locus in quo dated May 29, 1888, and recorded in Book N, Page 495. This places the title to the first tract in the name of McD Greene
- (c) (Tract #2) For the beginning entry of the second tract we have a grant to Lot Estee dated November 25, 1844, and recorded in Book T, Page 297.
- (d) We next have a deed from Lot Estes, et ux, to H. R. Estes dated February 9, 1880, and recorded in Book K, Page 59.
- (e) Next is a deed from H. R. Estes, et ux, to Emanuel Bolick dated September 15, 1883, and recorded in Book K, Page 120.
- (f) Next is a deed from Emanuel Bolick to James I. Teague dated December 6, 1891, and recorded in Book F, Page 114.
- (g) Next is a deed from James I. Teague to Sena Greene dated December 22, 1891, and recorded in Book R, Page 38.
- (h) Next is a deed from Sena Greene to McD Greene dated March 30, 1894, and recorded in Book R, Page 453.
- (i) Next and final link is a deed from McD Greene to Moses H. Cone dated August 5, 1897, and recorded in Book T, Page 298.

7. AMOS HENLEY TRACT

- (a) We begin our abstract for the Amos Henley tract by a grant to Lot Estes described in paragraph 6 (c) (second tract).
- (b) Next is a deed from Lot Estes to Enzer Greene dated November 10, 1880, and recorded in Book K, Page 122.
- (c) Next is a deed from J. E. (Enzer) Greene, et ux, to P. F. Greene dated February 29, 1896, and recorded in Book T, Page 479.
- (d) Next is a deed from P. F. Greene to J. P. Greene dated February 24, 1899, and recorded in Book U, Page 491. We are unable to find any record of J. P. Greene as grantor. This chain was found by a reference in the locus in quo to the Lot Estes grant.
- (e) For the second reference made in the locus in quo we have a grant to B. J. Greene dated May 30, 1885, and recorded in Book K, Page 91.
- (f) The next and final link is a deed from Amos Henley, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated November 14, 1901, and recorded in Book Z, Page 178.

8. L. N. CORPENING TRACT

- (a) We begin our abstract for the Corpening tract by a deed from L. L. Greene, Administrator of A. J. Estes to James I. Teague and Joseph H. Greene dated April 14, 1885, and recorded in Book B, Page 238. We find no record of A. J. Estes as grantee; however, we do have other evidence supporting the fact that L. L. Greene was the administrator of A. J. Estes. See explanation and abstract under Tract #24 (c).
- (b) We next have a quitclaim deed from James I. Teague to J. H. Greene dated August 7, 1897, and recorded in Book T, Page 599. It is apparent that this deed is to convey his interest in the property.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 101

- (c) Next is a deed from Joseph H. Greene to Emanuel Bolick, et ux, dated October 16, 1885 and recorded in Book T, Page 594.
- (d) Next is a deed from Emanuel Bolick, et ux, to M. E. Estes dated January 25, 1892, and recorded in Book T, Page 596.
- (e) Next is a deed from M. E. Estes, et ux, to I. N. Corpening dated April 19, 1897, and recorded in Book T, Page 593.
- (f) Next is a deed from I. N. Corpening to Moses H. Cone dated January 5, 1900, and recorded in Book V, Page 566.
- (g) Next we have a deed by the same parties to Moses H. Cone dated May 31, 1901, and recorded in Book Y, page 17. The habendum clause sets out that it is a correction deed of the one referred to in the preceding paragraphs.

9, 10, and 11. ALEXANDER P. BOLICK, A. P. BOLICK, TRACT TWO AND J. J. HENDERSON TRACT.

- (a) (Tract #9) These three tracts come from a common source. We begin with a deed from Colbert Blair to Lot Estes dated April 14, 1843, and recorded in Book D, Page 107.
- (b) Next is a deed from Lot Estes, et ux, to H. R. Estes dated February 9, 1880, and recorded in Book K, Page 59.
- (c) Next is a deed from H. R. Estes, et ux, to Alexander Bolick dated August 19, 1884, and recorded in Book K, Page 61.
- (d) Next is a deed from Alexander P. Bolick, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated April 14, 1899, and recorded in Book U, Page 572. This places the title to tract #9 in Moses H. Cone. (See Book K, Page 61, Tract #9 (c).)
- (e) (Tract #10) The history for this tract is the same into Alexander P. Bolick. We then have a deed from Alexander P. Bolick, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated August 8, 1898, and recorded in Book U, Page 208. This places the title to tract #10 in the name of Moses H. Cone. (See Book K, Page 61, Tract #9 (c).)
- (f) (Tract #11) The history of this tract is the same as the preceding two tracts into Alexander P. Polick. We have a deed from Alexander P. Bolick to Sarah Moody dated May 21, 1888, and recorded in Book U, Page 214. (See Book U, Page 212, Tract #11 (h).)
- (g) Next is a deed from Sarah Moody to W. C. Greene, et ux, dated July 25, 1895, and recorded in Book S, Page 538.
- (h) Next is a deed from W. G. Greene, et ux, to Mary Henderson dated April 24, 1897, and recorded in Book U, Page 212.
- (i) Next and final link is a deed from J. J. Henderson and wife, Mary Henderson to Moses H. Cone dated August 8, 1898, and recorded in Book U, Page 210.

12. A. S. EDMISTEN TRACT

- (a) The first recorded evidence to A. S. Edmisten is a deed from W. H. Edmisten, et ux, dated March 8, 1889, and recorded in Book S, Page 82.
- (b) Next is a deed from A. S. Edmisten, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated April 11, 1899, and recorded in Book U, Page 550.

13. AND 14. J. M. PEARSON TRACT

- (a) (Tract #13) We begin our abstract for the two Pearson tracts by a deed from John C. Blair to W. H. Edmisten dated September 24, 1861, and recorded in Book B, Page 377.
- (b) Next is a deed from A. S. Edmisten, Administrator of W. H. Edmisten to J. M. Pearson dated April 30, 1894, and recorded in Book T, Page 162.
- (c) Next is a deed from J. M. Pearson, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated April 11, 1899, and recorded in Book U, Page 548.
- (d) (Tract #14) For the other tract we have a deed from J. M. Pearson, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated August 28, 1903, and recorded in Book E, Page 378.

15. R. K. HARTLEY TRACT

- (a) The first record of this tract is a deed from Lot Estes, et ux, to John Estes dated November 6, 1872, and recorded in Book T, Page 276.
- (b) Next is a deed from John Estes, et ux, to Calvin C. Greene dated September 23, 1875, and recorded in Book G, Page 189.
- (c) Next is a deed from C. C. Greene, et ux, to W. H. Hardin dated April 15, 1887, and recorded in Book L, Page 553.
- (d) Next is a deed from William H. Hardin, et ux, to Mahala H. Fry dated March 1, 1888, and recorded in Book M, Page 232.
- (e) Next is a deed from J. T. Fry and wife, Mahala Fry to David Bowman dated March 1, 1888, and recorded in Book P, Page 48.
- (f) Next is a deed from David Bowman, et ux, to Thomas W. Cannon dated September 15, 1890, and recorded in Book P, Page 47.
- (g) Next is a deed from Thomas W. Cannon, et ux, to Robert K. Hartley dated January 2, 1891, and recorded in Book 6, Page 292.
- (h) Next and final link is a deed from R. K. Hartley, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated April 13, 1899, and recorded in Book U, Page 552.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 102

16, 17, 18 and 19. FRY TRACTS

- (a) (Tract #16) We begin our abstract for these tracts by a deed of trust from J. P. Fry and wife, Mahala Fry to J. B. Todd, Trustee for J. L. Hayes dated April 10, 1889, and recorded in Book B, Page 543.
- (b) Next is a deed from Joe B. Todd, Trustee, to Joshua Winkler dated April 10, 1889, and recorded in Book N, Page 453.
- (c) Next is a deed from Joshua Winkler, et ux, to J. P. Fry dated December 29, 1891, and recorded in Book P, Page 71.
- (d) Next is a deed from J. P. Fry, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated August 29, 1898, and recorded in Book U, Page 269.
- (e) (Tract #17) Next is a deed from Mary E. Rimer, E. C. Fry and M. A. Fry, heirs at law of J. P. Fry, deceased, to Moses H. Cone dated September 8, 1902, and recorded in Book Z, Page 409. We find no record of the heirs making a division of the property of J. P. Fry; however, from best information available a division was had and these deeds are for the various interests of the heirs of J. P. Fry.
- (f) (Track #18) Next is a deed from Kate Fry, another heir of J. P. Fry, to Moses H. Cone dated April 7, 1905, and recorded in Book 4, Page 82.
- (g) (Tract #19) Next is a deed from Avery Fry, et ux, who is another heir of J. P. Fry, to Moses H. Cone dated September 28, 1904, and recorded in Book Y, Page 583.

20. R.B. SPANN TRACT

- (a) The first record of this tract is a deed from William Spann, et ux, to Harrison Spann dated December 30, 1891, and recorded in Book S, Page 228.
- (b) Next is a deed from Harrison Spann, et ux, to R. E. Spann dated February 27, 1904, and recorded in Book 9, Page 196.
- (c) The next and final link is a deed from R. E. Spann, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated October 12, 1908, and recorded in Book 7, Page 395.

21. W.W. STRINGFELLOW TRACT

- (a) We begin our abstract for this tract by a deed from Lot Estes, et ux, to Leonard Estes dated April 12, 1873, and recorded in Book F, Page 127.
- (b) Next is a deed from Leonard W. Estes, et ux, to W. W. Stringfellow dated August 16, 1892, and recorded in Book I, Page 309. This places a part of the locus in quo in the name of W. W. Stringfellow.
- (c) We have another deed from L. W. (Leonard) Estes, et ux, to J. W. Bentley dated September 24, 1892, and recorded in Book P, Page 547.
- (d) Next is a deed from J. W. Bentley, et ux, to W. W. Stringfellow Dated March 29, 1893, and recorded in Book F, Page 549. This places the title to the remainder of the locus in quo in W. W. Stringfellow.
- (e) The next and final link is a deed from W. W. Stringfellow, et ux, to Moses H. Cone, acknowledged December 14, 1903, and recorded in Book 2, Page 95.

22. DEAN CRISP TRACT

- (a) The first record of E. D. Crisp is a deed from James I. Teague to John E. Ozentine dated February 4, 1887, and recorded in Book T, Page 237.
- (b) Next is a deed from John W. Oxentine, et ux, to Dean Crisp dated February 2, 1888, and recorded in Book T, Page 239.
- (c) Next is a deed from E. D. Crisp, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated July 13, 1897, and recorded in Book T, Page 240.

23. J. B. CLARKE TRACT

- (a) We begin our abstract for this tract by a deed from the heirs at law of William A. Lenoir to Walter W. Lenoir dated August 28, 1867, and recorded in Book 10, Page 216. The description calls for 17,500 acres in Watauga County and three other counties. It is a well known fact that William A. Lenoir owned various large boundaries of land in this section prior to this date.
- (b) Next is a deed from W. W. Lenoir to Joseph B. Clarke dated June 25, 1887, and recorded in Book M, Page 299. This tract embraces a part of the locus in quo. See reference at the end of the description of locus in quo. This places the title of the main portion of locus in quo in J. B. Clarke.
- (c) For the remaining portion (see explanation at end of description of locus in quo) we take tract #6 of the William A. Lenoir to Joseph C. Norwood as described in paragraph #1 (a) recorded in Book S, Page 470, as the beginning entry.
- (d) Next is a deed from Joseph C. Norwood, et ux, to Joseph B. Clarke dated September 11, 1877, and recorded in Book U, Page 492.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 103

(e) Next and final link is a deed from Joseph B. Clarke, et ux, to Moses H. Cone, dated November 13, 1898, and recorded in Book U, Page 556.

24. WATKINS (MAYE B. MARTIN) TRACT

(a) We begin our abstract for this tract by a deed from Lot Estes, et ux, to Alexander Estes (dated April 10, 1873, and recorded in Book A, Page 24.

(b) We next have a contract for the sale of this tract of land by A. J. Estes to F. F. Watkins dated March 17, 1884, and recorded in Book A, Page 384.

(c) We next have a judgment by L. L. Greene, Administrator of A. J. Estes, Deceased, vs. S. F. Watkins, docketed October 1, 1885, in Judgment Docket Book A, Page 222. It is assumed that this judgment was in consequence of the contract for sale referred to in the preceding paragraph. We find no record or further explanation of the judgment except the judgment itself.

(d) Next is a deed from Joseph B. Todd, Commissioner, under authority of the judgment referred to above, to S. F. Watkins dated February 13, 1886, and recorded in Book C, Page 366.

(e) Next is the deed from S. F. Watkins, et ux, to John D. Watkins, dated February 15, 1886, and recorded in Book C, Page 368

(f) Next is a deed from John D. Watkins, et ux, to Benjamin Franklin Watkins dated February 16, 1893, and recorded in Book D, Page 468.

(g) Next is a deed from Benjamin Franklin Watkins, et ux, to Maye Blanchard Martin dated August 8, 1897, and recorded in Book T, Page 468.

(h) Next and final link is a deed from Maye B. Martin, et vir, to Moses H. Cone dated December 21, 1897, and recorded in Book P, Page 477.

25. H. C. COFFEY TRACT

(a) We begin our abstract for the H. C. Coffey tract by a deed from William A. Lenoir to Joseph C. Norwood dated January 11, 1858, and recorded in Book S, Page 470. For complete abstract of this conveyance, see tract #1 (a).

(b) Next is a deed from Joseph C. Horwood, et ux, Thomas J. Lenoir, et ux, Jame Gwyn, et ux, Sarah J. Lenoir and Rufus T. Lenoir, et ux, to Walter W. Lenoir, dated August 8, 1867, and recorded in Book 10, Page 216.

(c) Next is a deed from Walter W. Lenoir to Henry C. Coffey dated October 6, 1881, and recorded in Book D, Page 435.

(d) Next is a deed from H. C. Coffey, et ux, to Moses H. Cone, acknowledged September 7, 1897, and recorded in Book T, Page 295.

26. BROWN AND SUDDERTH TRACTS

(a) We begin our abstract for the Brown and Sudderth tracts by a deed from William A. Lenoir to Joseph C. Norwood dated January 11, 1858, and recorded in Book S, Page 470. For complete abstract of this conveyance, see tract #1 (a).

(b) Next is a deed from Joseph C. Norwood, et ux, Thomas J. Lenoir, et ux, James Gwyn, et ux, Sarah J. Lenoir and Rufus T. Lenoir, et ux, to alter W. Lenoir, dated August 8, 1867, and recorded in Book 10, Page 216.

(c) Next is a deed from Walter W. Lenoir to James Sudderth dated 29 September, 1877, and recorded in Book H, Page 262.

(d) Next is a deed from I. H. Corpening, Guardian of Bettie, Cordie, Sallie, and George Sudderth and heirs at law of James Sudderth, to J. D. Brown, et ux, dated September 13, 1897, and recorded in Book T, Page 323.

(e) Next is a deed from J.D. Brown, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated January 13, 1899, and recorded in Book U, Page 554.

(f) Next is a deed from J. D. Brown, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated September 25, 1897, and recorded in Book T, Page 318. This covers the southwest portion, same as second tract of (d) above to Brown.

27. CALLOWAY TRACT

(a) We find no record of any conveyance to Robert O. West as grantee, therefore, we begin our abstract with a deed from Robert O. West, et ux, to Arthur W. Parks dated March 18, 1886 and recorded in Book R, Page 149.

(b) Next is a deed from A. W. Parks to John L. Springs dated August 30, 1895, and recorded in Book T, Page 179.

(c) Next is a deed from John L. Springs, et ux, to H. V. Calloway, et ux, dated September 9, 1903, and recorded in Book Y, Page 559.

(d) Next is a deed from W. V. Calloway, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated December 18, 1903, and recorded in Book 2, Page 93.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 104

28. LENOIR TRACT

- (a) We begin our abstract for the Lenoir tract with a deed from Joseph C. Lenoir, et al, to Walter W. Lenoir dated August 25, 1867, and recorded in Book 10, Page 216.
- (b) The next item in our abstract is the will of Walter W. Lenoir dated May 30, 1889, properly executed, in which he appoints Thomas B. Lenoir as his executor with full power of sale, and which he also authorizes the said T. B. Lenoir, Executor, to hold the property which forms a part of the locus in quo for a period not to exceed 15 years. Recorded in Will Book A, Page 72, office of the Clerk of Superior Court, Watauga County.
- (c) Next is a deed from T. B. Lenoir, Executor of Walter W. Lenoir, to Moses H. Cone dated November 10, 1899, and recorded in Book V, Page 568.

29. PRITCHETT, OXENTINE AND FOORS TRACTS

- (a) (Tract #1 and #2) We begin our abstract with a deed from M. W. Adams, et ux, to W. R. Bristol dated December 17, 1894, and recorded in Book T, Page 326. At the end of the description of this deed there is a reference that this property was devised to Elizabeth Adams by Arthur Pritchard; however, we find no record of such will having been filed.
- (b) Next is a deed from W. R. Bristol, et ux, to John Oxentine dated March 25, 1895, and recorded in Book T, Page 327. This places the title to tracts one and two in the name of John Oxentine.
- (c) (Tract #3) We have as our beginning entry for tract #3 a deed from Harvey W. Baldwin, et ux, to Joe R. Clarke as one heir of Amos Greene, deceased, (We find no record of Amos Greene as grantee) dated May 28, 1886, and recorded in Book L, Page 452.
- (d) We next have a deed from Chaney Greene, as one heir of Amos Greene, deceased, to Joe B. Clarke dated August 20, 1886, and recorded in Book L, Page 454. We have been unable to find recorded information as to any other heirs of Amos Greene, deceased, and it is assumed that these two deeds convey all the interest of Amos Greene, deceased.
- (e) Next is a deed from J. B. Clarke, et ux, to B. D. Clarke dated May 3, 1893, and recorded in Book R, Page 406.
- (f) Next is a deed from W. B. Clarke, et ux, to John Oxentine dated Jul 4, 1896, and recorded in Book T, Page 322. This places the title to tract #3 in the name of John Oxentine.
- (g) (Tract #4) For tract #4 we begin with a grant to Hiram West dated May 6 1899, and recorded in Book R, Page 60.
- (h) Next is a deed from Hiram West to John W. Oxentine, et ux, dated March 13, 1893, and recorded in Book P, Page 545. This places the title to tract #4 in the name of John W. Oxentine.
- (i) (Tract #5) For tract #5 we find a deed from Nellie Pritchard to N. W. Adams dated January 1, 1890, and recorded in Book T, Page 329. We find no record of N. W. Adams conveying this particular tract; however, attention is called to the explanation of the end of the deed described in the following paragraph, to the effect that tract #5 has the same description as tract #2 (see chain of title under #2 above).
- (j) (Tract #6) For the beginning entry of tract #6 we have a deed from B. L. Crisp, et ux, to John W. Oxentine dated February 3, 1888, and recorded in Book P, Page 591.
- (k) The next and final link is a deed from John W. Oxentine, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated September 25, 1897, and recorded in Book T, Page 319. This places the title to all six tracts in the name of Moses H. Cone.

30. H. R. HENLEY TRACT

- (a) We begin our abstract of the H. W. Baldwin tract by a grant to Elisha Sims dated February 6, 1880, and recorded in Book A, Page 441. This tract covers the first tract of the deed from Davis to Cone recorded in Book 2, Page 552.
- (b) Next is a deed from Elisha Sims, et ux, to Harvey W. Baldwin dated March 7, 1889, and recorded in Book N, Page 91. This places the title for the first tract in H. (Harvey) W. Baldwin.
- (c) Next is a grant to H. W. Baldwin dated August 12, 1889, and recorded in Book O, Page 39. This places all the locus in quo in the name of H. W. Baldwin.
- (d) We now strike a missing link as we find no conveyances from Baldwin as grantor and no conveyance to W. H. Edmisten and/or wife for this property. We pick up the chain by a deed from W. H. Edmisten and wife, W. A. Edmisten to T. H. Coffey dated March 8, 1895, and recorded in Book S, Page 184.
- (e) Next is a deed from T. H. Coffey to Annie A. Stewart and Wilbar G. Davis dated March 9, 1895, and recorded in Book S, Page 179.
- (f) Next is a deed from R. G. Davis and wife, Jennie Davis, to Moses H. Cone for a 1/2 undivided interest dated November 1, 1902, and recorded in Book Z, Page 552.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

---

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 105

(g) We find no deed from Annie A. Stewart, who was one of the grantees in the deed from T. H. Coffey, but we do have a tax foreclosure suit which would cover any remaining interest or other claim to said property as evidence by a deed from W. B. Baird, Sheriff, to D. V. Winebarger dated September 4, 1905, and recorded in Book 5, Page 124.

(h) Next is a deed from D. V. Winebarger to Moses H. Cone dated September 4, 1905, and recorded in Book 4, Page 181.

31. MOORE AND HENLEY TRACT

(a) We begin our abstract for the Moore and Henley tract by a deed from Joseph W. Stafford, et ux, to Arthur Pritchard dated February 27, 1873, and recorded in Book E, Page 363.

(b) We do not find any conveyance by Arthur Pritchard as grantor, but we do find a deed from Eleanor Pritchard with the same description to Luther M. Moore and Amos E. Henley dated April 21, 1884, and recorded in Book K, Page 100. We have been unable to connect the two parties from the records, however, as noted in the habendum clause, Eleanor Pritchard evidently was the legal heir of Arthur Pritchard.

(c) Next is a deed from M. L. Moore, et ux, and A. F. Henley, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated July 26, 1897, and recorded in Book T, Page 242.

(d) The calls of the above deed covers the locus in quo, but also calls for an exception of 45-3/4 acres conveyed to P. G. Shearer which is shown on the map as the Shearer property and which tract is not at this time a part of the Cone property. For the deed covering this exception we have a deed from M. L. Moore, et ux, and A. F. Henley, et ux, to P. G. Shearer dated January 27, 1890, and recorded in Book \_\_, Page 232.

32. PINKNEY TRACT

(a) For what is designated as the Pinkney tract on the map we begin our abstract by a deed from J. L. Springs, et ux, as the earliest recorded instrument found covering said property, to J. B. Brown dated October 13, 1905, and recorded in Book 4, Page 196.

(b) Next is a deed from J. B. Brown, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated November 9, 1905, and recorded in Book 7, Page 118.

33. FULWILDER TRACT

(a) For the detached tract designated as Fulwilder we begin by a grant to Henry Moore dated October 10, 1895, and recorded in Book 3, Page 34.

(b) Next is a deed from Henry Moore, et ux, to W. L. Fulwilder dated November 17, 1902, and recorded in Book 3, Page 541.

(c) Next is a mortgage deed executed by Wade Fulwilder, et ux, to J. B. Clarke dated April 11, 1906, and recorded in Book L, Page 26.

(d) Next is a deed by J. B. Clarke as mortgagee to Moses H. Cone dated December 5, 1906, and recorded in Book 6, Page 166.

34. SPRINGS TRACT

(a) We begin our abstract designated as the Springs tract on the map by a deed from Robert O. West, et ux, to Arthur W. Parks dated March 18, 1886, and recorded in Book N, Page 149.

(b) Next is a deed from Arthur W. Parks to John L. Springs, dated August 30, 1895, and recorded in Book T, Page 179.

(c) Next is a deed from J. L. Springs, et ux, to W. V. Calloway, et ux, dated September 9, 1903, and recorded in Book Y, Page 559.

(d) Next is a deed from W. V. Calloway, et ux, to J. D. Brown, dated December 18, 1903, and recorded in Book 2, Page 556.

(e) Next is a deed from J. D. Brown, et ux, to Bertha L. Cone dated October 15, 1909, and recorded in Book 12, Page 112.

35. D. F. SUMMEY TRACT

(a) This tract does not show a separate place on the map, but it will be noted in the chain of the preceding tract a one acre tract to D. F. Summey and one acre to E. M. Andrews was excepted and the earliest conveyances in said chain were, of course, the beginning entries for these two tracts. We then have a deed from J. L. Springs, et ux, to D. F. Summey, dated November 1, 1899, and recorded in Book V, Page 433.

(b) Next is a deed from D. F. Summey, et ux, to Bertha L. Cone dated December 24, 1909, and recorded in Book 11, Page 504.

36. E. M. ANDREWS TRACT (See next page)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Flat Top Estate  
Watauga, North Carolina

---

Maps – Continuation Page

Page 106

37. SCHOOL PROPERTY

- (a) For the small tract known as the school property see the history as set out under tract #5 which covers this small tract. We then have a deed from Moses H. Cone, et ux, to the Board of Education dated November 1, 1905, and recorded in Book 16, Page 243.
- (b) We next have a deed by the Board of Education to Mrs. Moses H. Cone dated October 1, 1928, and recorded in Book 38, Page 177.

This completes the chain of title of all the tracts which we were able to locate and distinguish on the map and from the best we were able to determine there are no portions of the map which have not been covered by the various deeds listed in this history; however, we now have three separate conveyances to Mr. Cone which appear to be regular, but as stated above, we have been unable to reconcile the description with a description on the map. Since they were conveyances to Moses H. Cone, and since they were never conveyed by Mr. Cone, it is assumed that they are tracts somewhere within the map.

38. J. D. BROWN TRACT

- (a) For this tract we begin with a deed from Thomas H. Coffey to Pinkney Baldwin as the earliest conveyance we are able to find dated July 6, 1892, and recorded in Book 6, Page 376.
- (b) Next is a deed from Pinkney Baldwin, et ux, to J. D. Brown, dated March 22, 1907, and recorded in Book 4, Page 575.
- (c) Next is a deed from J. D. Brown, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated October 14, 1907, and recorded in Book 7, Page 117.

39. A. T. GREENE TRACT

- (a) For this tract we begin with a deed from Minerva Greene, et vir, to Abner Greene dated January 24, 1885, and recorded in Book K, Page 405.
- (b) Next is a deed from Abner F. Greene, et ux, to Andrew Talbner Greene dated August 27, 1892, and recorded in Book U, Page 68.
- (c) Next is a deed from Andrew Talbner Greene, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated April 29, 1898, and recorded in Book U, Page 65.

40. J. D. BROWN TRACT

- (a) We find no conveyances covering this property to J. D. Brown; therefore, our first entry is J. D. Brown, et ux, to Moses H. Cone dated January 1, 1898, and recorded in Book T, Page 515.

36. E. M. ANDREWS TRACT

- (a) The same provisions apply to this tract as noted under the chain for tract 35. We then have a deed from Lohn L. Springs, et ux, to E. M. Andrews dated November 6, 1889, and recorded in Book V, Page 432.
- (b) We then have a deed from E. M. Andrews, et ux, and D. H. Blair as trustee in bankruptcy to Bertha L. Cone dated February 14, 1907, and recorded in Book 11, Page 502. The provision in this deed sets out that E. M. Andrews was adjudged bankrupt and that the property herein described was set apart as a part of his exemptions. We have not investigated the bankrupt proceedings since Andrews and wife, as well as the trustee in bankruptcy, signed the deed, and in view of the length of time under the North Carolina law. No question could be raised as to the sufficiency of this title.



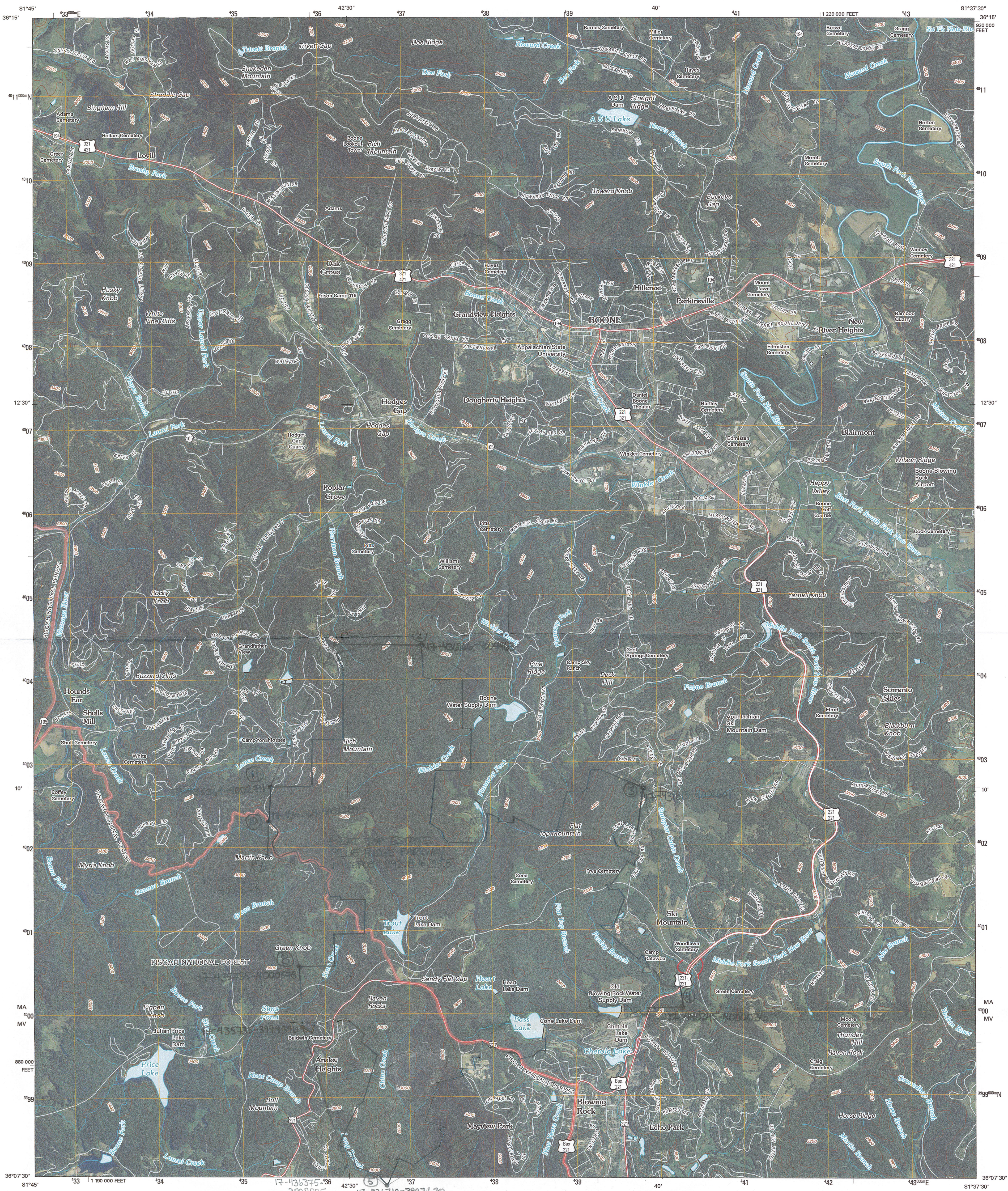
Flat Top Estate  
Blue Ridge Parkway  
Watauga Co., NC



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

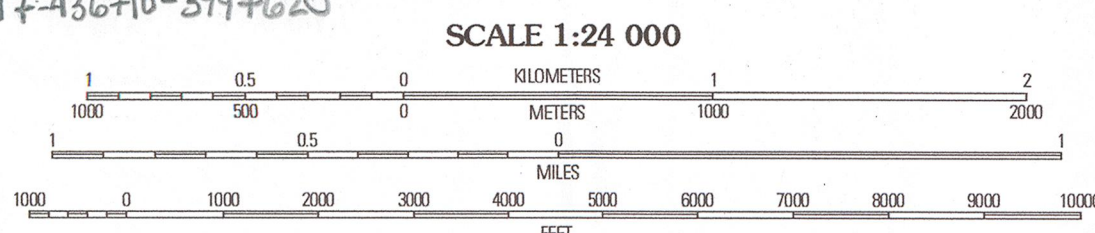
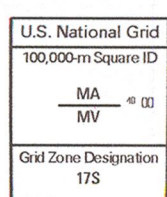
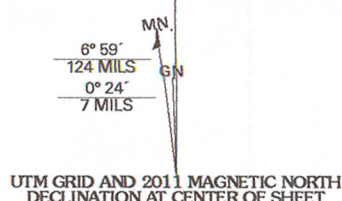


BOONE QUADRANGLE  
NORTH CAROLINA  
7.5-MINUTE SERIES



Produced by the United States Geological Survey  
North American Datum of 1983 (NAD83)  
World Geodetic System of 1984 (WGS84) Projection and  
1 000-meter grid: Universal Transverse Mercator, Zone 17S  
10 000-foot ticks: North Carolina Coordinate System of 1983

Imagery:.....NAP, September 2009  
Roads:.....©2006-2010 Tele Atlas  
Roads within US Forest Service Lands:.....FS Topo Data  
with limited Forest Service updates, 2009  
Names:.....GNIS, 2009  
Hydrography:.....National Hydrography Dataset, 2009  
Contours:.....National Elevation Dataset, 2008



This map was produced to conform with version 0.5.10 of the  
draft USGS Standards for 7.5-Minute Quadrangle Maps.  
A metadata file associated with this product is draft version 0.5.13



Sherwood	Zionville	Todd
Ville Crucis	Boone	Deep Gap
Grandfather Mountain	Globe	Buffalo Cove

ADJOINING 7.5 QUADRANGLES

ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Interstate Route  
US Route  
Ramp  
State Route  
Local Road  
4WD  
FS Primary Route  
FS Passenger Route  
FS High Clearance Route

Check with local Forest Service unit  
for current travel conditions and restrictions.

BOONE, NC  
2011

































**MOSES M. CONE MEMORIAL**

THE 3600 ACRE MOUNTAIN ESTATE OF MOSES M. CONE WAS DONATED TO THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AS A "PLEASURE-GROUND" IN 1950. TWO MILES OF CARRIAGE ROADS IN THE PARK OFFER THE HIKER AND HORSEMAN A QUIET WAY THROUGH BEAUTIFUL FOREST AND HIGHLAND MEADOWS.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE





























HORSEBACK RIDERS  
STAY ON TRAILS  
SHOOT GUNS PROHIBITED

































SANDY FLAT MISSIONARY  
BAPTIST CHURCH  
SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:00  
PREACHING 11:00  
WED. NIGHT PRAYER SER. 7:00

SINGING  
OCT 31 8:00 PM  
DOWNS FAMILY  
CORNETT FAMILY

PASTOR  
REV. MAX WEST

MANS

JOHN

MANS







































